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J. F. J. Parks
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OUR GREAT FAMILIES

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TALES

OF

OUR GREAT FAMILIES

BY

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PREFACE

UNDER the title of 'Tales of our Great Families' I have ventured to publish a series of narratives relating to the families of the titled and untitled nobility of this country, in the hope of amusing my readers with materials which for many years I have been gleaning from various sources, and which have grown so rapidly in my hands that my only difficulty seems to lie in selecting amid such an *embarras de richesses*. If it be not literally true that every house, whether high or low, has its 'skeleton in the closet,' at all events the past history of most of our ancient houses is replete with incidents, which, however artlessly they may be told, will certainly make good the adage that 'truth is stranger than fiction.'

In treating of these matters I wish by way of preface to remark that my readers must not always look for *novelty*. I shall often, I know, be telling a 'thrice-told tale'; for in the anecdotal writings of Horace Walpole, Mrs. Delany, Sir Nathanial Wraxall, the Hon. Grantley Berkeley, Captain Gronow, Lord William Lennox, the late Duke of Buckingham, Sir Bernard Burke, and Dr. Doran I have a constant well from which to draw supplies. It is possible, however, to recast these materials and those taken from other sources, and to mould them all into one harmonious whole, which, I trust, may not be found devoid of interest. I am treading on delicate ground, and I am conscious that here and there I may wound the tender

susceptibilities of descendants and relatives of the personages whom I may bring upon the stage. But to these I would say that the lives of the members of our old historic houses are themselves historic, and that I have a full right to wake up the memory of what already stands recorded against them in the gossiping pages of Sir Nathaniel Wraxall or Horace Walpole, unless I have reason to believe that the stories I tell are untrue. If these papers shall have any result beyond the amusement of the leisure hours of those who take an interest in the fates and fortunes of our 'Great Families,' I feel no doubt that, on the whole, that influence will not be of an injurious nature, and that I shall not be justly chargeable with lowering the esteem in which I hope that the aristocracy of this land will long be held. My papers may *occasionally* help to show up a pretender and a charlatan in his true colours; but in the long run they will be found, I am confident, rather to enhance the interest which attaches to that body at whose head stand the titled names of Howard and Stanley, Talbot and Herbert, Courtenay and Cavendish, and the equally noble though untitled name of Scrope.

E. W.

HAMPSTEAD, N.W.
June 1877.

A second and cheaper edition of these 'Tales' having been called for, I have revised them and slightly altered them where I have found, either from critics in the press or from friends and correspondents, that my statements are doubtful or inaccurate.

E. W.

7 HYDE PARK MANSIONS,
May 1890.

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Tales of Our Great Families

THE LADY BLANCHE ARUNDELL OF WARDOUR

Few of the ruined homes of our ancient families are surrounded with a brighter halo of interest than the old Castle of Wardour, which stands on the south-western border of Wiltshire, about half-way between Salisbury and Shaftesbury; and few heroines of our country have earned a fairer name for bravery, courage, and devotion in the hour of danger than the Lady Blanche Arundell of Wardour.

By birth the Lady Blanche came of a noble and distinguished race, the Somersets, at that time Earls of Worcester, now Marquises of Worcester and Dukes of Beaufort. She was the sixth out of seven daughters who were born to Edward, the fourth Earl, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Francis, Earl of Huntingdon; and early in the reign of James I. she became the wife of Thomas, second Lord Arundell of Wardour, whose father, known far and wide in his day as 'the Valiant,' had been created Lord Arundell of Wardour, and also a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, on account of his gallantry at the siege of Gran in Hungary, where, serving under the banner of the Emperor Rodolph of Germany, he captured the Turkish standard with his own hands.

The Emperor's patent or charter (A.D. 1695) states expressly that the title was conferred on him because 'he had behaved himself manfully in the field, and also had shown great proof of valour in the assaulting of divers cities and castles, especially in forcing the water-tower near Strigonium, when he took from the Turks their banner with his own hand.' This honour was extended to every one of his children and descendants of either sex, so that every infant who is born an Arundell is born also a count or countess of the Roman Empire. Collins, in his Peerage, gives an amusing account of the reason which led to the Count being created an English Baron also. 'On his return home, a controversy arising among the Peers whether that dignity, so conferred by a foreign potentate, should be allowed here as to place and precedence, or any other privilege, it occasioned a warm dispute, which is mentioned by Camden in his History of Queen Elizabeth. The Queen, being asked her opinion of the case, is reported to have answered that "there was a close tie of affection between the prince and subject, and that, as chaste wives should have no glances but for their own spouses, so should faithful subjects keep their eyes at home, and not gaze on foreign coronets; that she, for her part, did not care that her sheep should wear a stranger's mark, or dance after the whistle of every foreigner."' The consequence was that the precedence claimed on account of this foreign honour was disallowed. King James, however, soon after his accession, made amends for Elizabeth's jealousy by creating him Lord Arundell of Wardour, in the county of Wilts.

In 1639 Lady Blanche's husband succeeded to his father's peerage, just as the Puritan storm was gathering which was destined to burst on the head of King Charles I. and of all his devoted and loyal-hearted followers and subjects, whether Protestants or Roman Catholics.

In the history of the Civil War which is usually known as 'The Great Rebellion,' few episodes are more touching than that of the siege, capture, and recapture, of the Castle of

Wardour; but I must first say a word or two about the castle itself.

The Manor of Wardour, as may be seen in Sir R. C. Hoare's 'History of Wiltshire,' was in early times the property of a family named St. Martin; but the castle itself appears to have been built in the reign of Richard II., the last of the Plantagenets, by John, Lord Lovel of Tichmarsh. The Lovels inhabited it for only three generations, as it was sold on the death of the last-named nobleman's grandson in 1494, the next heir to the estate finding himself involved in great difficulties by his adherence to the failing cause of the Red Rose of Lancaster.

The property of the Lovels was at that time as extensive as any in the kingdom, and it must be owned that Lord Lovel showed great taste in the selection of a site for his castle, which is thus described in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' for August 1867: 'It stands on a flat plateau, supported by high wooded banks on every side, except on the south-west, where the ground slopes down to the park and the lake, admitting a glowing sun to light and warm the haughty building. A spot of greater beauty could hardly have been found amongst all the scenes afforded by that peculiarly rich part of Wiltshire where it marches with the Dorsetshire border. On the eastern side, flanked by two strong square towers, was the great entrance, over which is still to be read a Latin inscription relating how the castle came into the hands of the Arundells.'

After the Lovels, its next owners were the Touchets, Lords Audley (afterwards Earls of Castlehaven), to whom it was given by Edward IV. in reward of their adherence to the White Rose of York. The Touchets, however, did not long hold it; for the second of that line who owned it, having been taken in arms against Henry VII. at the battle of Blackheath, was beheaded on Tower Hill. His estates, of course, were confiscated; and Wardour Castle, after being held for a short time by Sir Fulke Greville, was purchased by Sir John Arundell, of Lanherne, in Cornwall, who presented it to his second son,

Thomas, who married a sister of Catharine Howard, the fifth wife of Henry VIII. Attaching himself, however, very warmly to the Duke of Somerset, in the next reign he shared the Duke's fate, and perished on the scaffold.

The estates of Wardour were now again confiscated, and granted to the Earl of Pembroke, whose seat at Wilton lay but a few miles distant, and who, no doubt, was glad to join Wardour on to his own domain. However, in the course of a few years the Earl resolved to sell it, when it was repurchased by Sir Matthew Arundell, whose eldest son was the hero of Hungary, and became the first Lord Arundell of Wardour, as stated above.

The chief features of the building, as it was erected by Lord Lovel, are visible to the present day. It forms an irregular quadrangle, flanked at the four corners by four large main towers. Above the entrance are the large windows of what was the great banqueting-hall; they still remain, presenting but a few indications of the rich tracery with which they once were filled. The form of the court was a hexagon. Each tower had a staircase of its own, and a door leading into the courtyard – I can scarcely call a six sided space a quadrangle – in the centre of which was a deep well. Besides these, there was one principal staircase, leading up from the court into the great hall. Parts of these staircases still remain, but not a floor or a roof now stands entire; and the great banqueting-hall, which once resounded with song and music, and was gay with banners and tapestry, is now roofless and bare, inhabited only by owls and jackdaws, which find a home in the ivy that clusters thick and dark around the tenantless walls. But it is time that I should hasten on to tell the story of the siege of Wardour Castle, and of the heroism of the Lady Blanche.

Thomas, the second Lord Arundell, having always shown the warmest and most loyal attachment to the royal cause, as soon as the Civil War broke out joined King Charles I., with a regiment of horse, which he had raised and equipped at his

own expense, and was soon as much distinguished by his bravery as by his fidelity. Foreseeing the vengeance which his loyalty would be sure to call down on his house and family should the cause of the Roundheads and Puritans' triumph, before joining the King's standard he exacted from his wife a promise that, if his castle should be attacked in his absence, it should be defended to the very last extremity. How faithfully the Lady Blanche redeemed the promise which she made to her lord, as he tore himself from her embrace on quitting Wardour for the last time, is proved by the written testimony of both friends and enemies.

I will not waste time by dwelling long on the picture which that parting scene must have presented, beyond saying that it is enough to have inspired half our painters and poets. There is the gate of the old grey castle, in deep shadow, while the rays of the afternoon sun light up the opposite bank with a golden glow, which catches the plumes of the Cavaliers and dances on their long, flowing hair, as their horses prance and toss their heads, impatient to start on their march towards Lansdowne Hill and Bath ; and the first of the troops are already defiling from the castle yard. The standard of the Arundells (sable, six *hirondelles*, swallows, arg.) waves in the breeze, and the ringing bugle, the tramping of the horses, the gay colouring of their housings, and the bright equipments of their riders, all combine to form a brilliant contrast to that group of anxious and loving faces that cluster round the great doorway, seeking the last embrace and the last words of those dear ones on whom they feel and know they are possibly now to look for the last time.

Alas, for the Lady Blanche ! Her fair face, crowned with locks whitening with her sixtieth summer, is raised to meet the lips of her true lord, who lowers his casque and stoops from his charger to give her the last kiss. Alas, indeed, for her ! for, whatever fate may be in store for the dear ones of her companion ladies, that kiss and that look of her husband was destined to be the very last. A few short months, and

her husband would come back indeed, but a corpse. He would come back with glory and honour to Wardour, but not to her: he would come back to his grave in the church hard by. He would come back; but it would not be in his power to give her that which she coveted most of all things in this world—the smile of approval, the thought of which was to be her solace through the weary and toilsome hours of the coming siege. There, too, stands her son's wife, Cicely, the daughter of Sir Henry Compton, of Brambletye House, Sussex, and wife of Sir John Fermor, young and delicate, and half heart-broken at having to part with her husband, the father of her three young children, who cling to her, half sobbing, half smiling, puzzled at the grief of their mother and their grandmother, and at the pretty sight of the warlike cavalcade.

As Lord Arundell rode away, gazing back on his home, well may we imagine that the Lady Blanche would raise her hands to Heaven and vow before saints and angels that she would keep the word which she had given to her lord, and that the vow was echoed back firmly and quietly by Cicely, and somewhat more loudly and emphatically by the fifty serving-men who were to form the garrison, and the bevy of waiting-maids who stood crying in the background. Though sixty years old, she joined to the firmness and wisdom of that age the energy of youth and the spirit of a Somerset; and it was without the smallest signs of fear or of any weak emotion that on the 2nd of May, 1643, she received the news that the Puritan leader, Sir Edward Hungerford, was at her doors, and that, in the name of the Parliament, he required admittance in order to search for Cavaliers and 'malignants.'

It is needless to say that Sir Edward's demand was disdainfully refused, and that he saw enough to convince him that it would be no easy task to effect an entry into that castle in its owner's absence. He therefore sent for Colonel Strode and some troops under his command, which raised the force at his disposal to a total of thirteen hundred men. He then sent a messenger to the Lady Blanche, demanding the

surrender of the castle in due form; but the only reply that he received was that 'she had a command from her lord to keep it, and would obey that command.'

For the last time on that evening, Lady Arundell looked out in freedom from her chamber in the tower; and it must have been with a heavy heart that she gazed on the lake below her windows—that lake which still spreads its peaceful waters to reflect the glowing sunsets—and noted the splashing of the carp as they played on its surface, and the song of the blackbird, the thrush, and the cuckoo. But, together with that heavy heart, she nursed and inwardly cherished the firm resolve that she would dare and do all that woman could and might, for the sake of her husband who had gone to the war.

Late at night, a harsher sound must have been borne on the breeze to her ears—the rattle of heavy guns and of soldiers escorting them along the road that wound through the woods. The Puritans, at all events, had lost no time, for in the morning her waiting-maid aroused her by the news that the guns were already in position to bear full upon the walls. Unfortunately, too, for herself and for Wardour, the castle was placed in a situation chosen rather for its beauty than for its military capabilities. It lay low, and the ground, rising around it on three out of the four sides, gave her enemies a great advantage, of which the Roundheads were not slow to avail themselves.

Next day commenced a fierce cannonade, and the first shot fell with deadly force in the banqueting-hall, where it cruelly damaged the great chimney-piece, richly carved in dark red marble, and said to have been worth 2,000*l.* even at that time—a far larger sum than that which is now represented by those figures. Portions of this mantel-piece are still preserved in the grounds, worked into a sort of rockery, and some of the cannon-balls have also been kept as relics and memorials of the siege. For six long days and nights, almost without intermission, the battery continued to hurl its deadly missiles on the besieged garrison, who stoutly and valiantly

rejected the conditions proffered over and over again by the Roundheads ; for the latter promised quarter to the ladies alone, and not to the men under arms. The number within the walls was small, for out of the fifty males only twenty-five were trained fighting-men ; and had it not been for the assistance of the maid-servants, who steadily loaded their muskets, they would have been exhausted with fatigue and want of sleep before they could hold out long enough to obtain honourable terms for all.

On the fourth or fifth day of the siege two mines were sprung. The first did but little damage, as fortunately it proved to be outside the walls of the castle ; but the second, which exploded inside one of the smaller vaults, greatly shook the building, and showed that the fabric was in danger of destruction. Still, however, the Lady Blanche resolved not to yield ; and it was not until the sixth day, when the rebels brought petards and applied them to the great door, and balls of wild-fire to throw in at the windows, that the gallant defender found herself obliged to 'sound a parley.'

Thus reduced to the last straits, she agreed to a surrender, but on condition of obtaining quarter for all within the castle. It was also agreed that the wearing apparel of the ladies should be at their own disposal, and they should be allowed six serving-men to attend upon them wherever their captors should dispose of them ; and it was further agreed that all the furniture in the castle should be safe from plunder.

Finding themselves, however, in possession of the castle walls, these 'saints of the Lord' did not feel bound to observe any of their promises except the first. 'Faith is not to be kept with heretics,' it would appear, is a principle current in society at large, and acted on by many others besides those whom the world calls 'Romish bigots.' It is true that they spared the lives of the gallant defenders of the castle, though the latter had used their guns and crossbows so well as to kill above sixty of the besieging force. The ladies and the three children were at once led off as prisoners of war to

Shaftesbury, just over the Dorsetshire border, where they had the mortification of seeing five cartloads of the spoils of Wardour driven in triumph through the streets of the town on their way to Dorchester, which was then in the hands of the Parliamentary army.

After a time, considering, or pretending to consider, that the captive ladies and children were not safe at Shaftesbury, the rebels proposed to remove them to Bath, where the plague was then raging, and where the 'saints' probably hoped that death would do the work which they dared not try with their own hands. But here the high spirit of Lady Arundell was fully aroused, and, as she lay at the time in bed, worn out with fatigue and anxiety, she refused to be removed unless she was dragged by actual main force. Dreading the unpopularity which such severity would draw down upon their cause in the Western counties, where the name of Arundell was held in high esteem, at length the 'saints' abandoned their designs; so they contented themselves with wresting from Cicely Arundell her two little boys, aged nine and seven respectively, whom they considered such objects of alarm that they sent them under a strong guard to Dorchester.

Meantime my readers may wish to know how it fared with the fabric which had stood the siege, and with the estates that surrounded it. If so, I will tell them.

Sir Edward Hungerford and his troops, out of pure revenge and spite, laid waste the whole place with a frantic zeal, the effects of which are felt down to the present day. They tore up the park railings several miles in extent, let loose or killed the red and fallow deer—which have never since been replaced—burnt the park lodges and entrances, and cut down the trees, which they sold for fourpence and sixpence apiece, though they must have been worth as many pounds. They drove away all the horses and cattle, and even cut to pieces and sold as waste metal the leaden pipes which conveyed water underground to the castle; in short, it is computed by local antiquaries that the havoc which they caused would scarcely

be repaired for a hundred thousand pounds. Sir Edward Hungerford placed the castle under the command of Colonel Ludlow, who held it from May 1643 to the March of the following year.

Just at this time of Ludlow's taking possession, news was brought to Wardour that Lord Arundell, the husband of the Lady Blanche, had died at Oxford of wounds which he had received at the battle of Lansdowne. A fortnight had scarcely elapsed when his son, young Lord Arundell, the husband of Cicely, appeared before the walls, and summoned Ludlow and his crew to deliver up the place to him, 'for his Majesty's use.' This summons was of course refused; and, burning with rage at his father's death, his mother's capture, and his children's imprisonment, he withdrew for a time to collect materials for the siege of his own castle. Early in the following year, accordingly, he sat down before it, determining to retake it, either by siege or by blockade. At length, despairing of being able to effect his object by any less violent means, he resolved to blow up the towers and walls rather than to leave it in the hands of the rebels. Accordingly, in the middle of the month of March, he sprang beneath it a mine which shattered its walls and western towers, and did so much damage also to the stores of corn and other provisions, that the garrison found themselves reduced to only four days' rations. Seeing at length that all hope was at an end, Colonel Ludlow capitulated, on terms which *were* observed by the Royalists, and the castle came back again into the hands of its rightful owners;

> And Bertram's right and Bertram's might
> Did meet on Ellangowan height.

But the fabric came back into the hands of the noble and gallant Arundells sadly shorn of its chief ornaments, and of all that makes a house to be a home; and bitter indeed must have been the feelings of the young Lord Arundell when he once again entered the well-known halls, and gazed upon the

bare walls of the despoiled rooms which for ten long weary months had been tenanted by the rough and sour soldiers of the Parliament, instead of by his own gentle wife and his noble-hearted mother. However, he did return; and the family once more occupied such portions of the castle as could be put into a habitable condition.

Just over a hundred years ago, when the old castle had seen a hundred and thirty years of ruin and desolation, a new and noble mansion, in the Classical style, which now bears the name of Wardour Castle, was built by the then Lord Arundell, about a mile from the ancient site, where the old grey walls, rising proudly out of a wilderness of dark foliage beside a lake, and what once was a garden and a 'pleasaunce,' still tell the tale of their defence by the hands of the Lady Blanche Arundell.

And what about Lady Blanche herself? She survived for some six years or more the loss of her husband and the siege of his castle. On her release from captivity at Shaftesbury, she retired to Winchester, where she lived in seclusion, leading a life of piety and charity; and there she ended her days in October 1649, having lived long enough to add to her other griefs by mourning the fate of the sovereign whom her husband had served so loyally. The fine old parish church of Tisbury, adjoining the park of Wardour, now holds all that is mortal of the Lady Blanche Arundell and her husband.

It is some satisfaction, though a poor one at the best, to know that Providence in the end punished the proud house of Hungerford, one of whose members had taken so active a part in bringing about the desolation of the fair Castle of Wardour. Those who wish to know how justice overtook the Hungerfords will do well to consult that storehouse of amusing anecdote, 'The Vicissitudes of Families,' by Sir Bernard Burke.

THE TWO FAIR GUNNINGS

Can it be that female beauty has degenerated in England during the last century? Such a decadence seems improbable, nay, impossible, in a country where the fair sex avail themselves so plentifully of Nature's two great beautifiers, fresh air and cold water! And yet, which among our celebrated beauties of the present day, whose photographs may be seen in every stationer's window, can boast of having excited one half of the *furore* created by the two fair Miss Gunnings, who took the London world of fashion by storm in the year 1751, and turned the West End almost mad?

These ladies, whose beauty and whose names are familiar to every reader of Horace Walpole and of books of contemporary anecdote and biography, were sisters, of plain Irish extraction, wholly without fortune; and their only title to aristocratic family was the fact that they were distantly related to an Irish baronet of the name. The sudden appearance of these stars in the heaven of London fashion caused so great a sensation that even the staid rules of a Court Drawing Room at St. James's were defied by a mob of noble gentlemen and ladies clambering upon chairs and tables to get a look at them.

Walpole speaks of them as being 'scarce gentlewomen, but by their mother'; but this somewhat ill-natured remark is scarcely true. The family of Gunning could hardly be said to be aristocratic in name or in lineage, but still it was respectable enough; and on their mother's side, Maria and Elizabeth Gunning might fairly boast that the blood of the Plantagenets ran in their veins.

All that the Heralds' College can tell us of the Gunning family—beyond the fact that a member of it, having been British Minister at the Courts of Berlin and St. Petersburg, was raised to a baronetcy about a century ago—is that it was

divided into two branches, which possessed, in the reign of Henry VIII., considerable estates in the counties of Kent, Somerset, and Gloucester; and that one of the Kentish Gunnings, in the reign of James I., settled in Ireland, where he became the ancestor of the Gunnings of Castle Coote, in the county of Roscommon. One of these, a Mr. John Gunning, by his marriage with the Hon. Bridget Bourke, a daughter of Viscount Bourke, of Mayo, had, along with a son who became a general in the army, and who distinguished himself at the battle of Bunker's Hill, three fair daughters, who were said to rival the Three Graces. Two of these came to London, like many other portionless girls before and after their time, to push their way in the world of fashion, their 'faces' being their 'fortunes,' in the words of the well-known song :

'My face is my fortune, sir,' she said.

The third, and youngest, appears to have settled down quietly in matrimonial life in the South of Ireland; but she does not come within the scope of this paper, which I intend to devote to the career of her two sisters.

A letter concerning the Gunnings, written by the parish clerk of Hemingford Grey, in Huntingdonshire, to Mr. James Madden, of Cole House, Fulham, is worth transcribing, less for the sake of the information it contains—which is, for the most part, an incorrect version of well-known facts -than on account of the amusing self-importance of the writer. I follow his orthography :

'Sir,—I take the Freedom in wrighting to you, from an information of Mr. Warrinton, that you would be Glad to have the account of my Townswoman the Notefied, the Famis, Beautifull Miss Gunnings. Born at Hemingford Grey, tho they left the Parish before I had knoledge Enough to Remember them, and I was born in 32 (1732). But I will give you the Best account I can, which I believe is Better than any man in the Country besides Myself, tho I have not the Birth

Register for so long a Date, and since Dr. Dickens is dead, I dont know where it is, but the Best account I Can Give you is, Elizth., the Eldest, married to his Grace the Duke of Hamilton, after his Decease to the Duke of Arguile ; the second, Mary, to the Viscount of Coventre ; the third I never knew ritely to hom, but I beleeve to some privett Gentleman. I Rember a many years ago, att least 30, seeing her picture in a print shop, I believe in St. Poul's Churchyard, as follows :

> the youngest of these Beauties here we have in vue,
> so like in person to the other two,
> ho Ever views her features and her fame,
> will see at once that Gunning is her Name

—which is the Best account I Can give you of these three ; but then there was two more, which perhaps you don't know anything about, which I will give you the true Mortalick register off, from a black mavel which lies in our chancel, as follows : Sophia Gunning, the youngest of four daughters, all born at Hemmingford, in Huntingdonshire, to John Gunning, Esq. ; died an infant, 1737. Lissy Gunning, his fifth daughter, born in Ireland ; died December 31, 1752, aged 8 years 10 months. "Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. xix. 14. This, Sir, is the Truest and Best Information I Can Give you, or can Get, and if this is of any use to you, I should be much obliged to you to let me have a line or two from you, that I may be satisfied that it was not in vain.

'And am, Sir,

'Your most obedient and humble servant,

'Wm. Criswell.

'Hemmingford Grey, Aug. 14, 1796.'

But little is known of Catherine, the third Miss Gunning, in the annals of fashion ; but I can so far supplement the information of Mr. William Criswell as to tell your readers that the 'privett gentleman' alluded to was Robert Travis, Esq., to whom Catherine Gunning was married in 1769, and who

had a daughter who, in the next generation, kept up the fame of the family for personal beauty.

Whatever may have been the original fortune and estate of John Gunning, of Castle Coote, Ireland, the progenitor of 'the two fair Gunnings,' it would seem that at the time when they were just budding into womanhood, their mother, the Hon. Mrs. Gunning, seriously contemplated sending them to seek their fortunes upon the stage. Walpole more than once alludes to this intention ; and the circumstances under which the lovely sisters were presented at Dublin Castle, the year before their *début* in London, would seem to give colour to the supposition. The Gunnings were on intimate terms with Thomas Sheridan, at that time manager of the Dublin Theatre ; and Mrs. Gunning, wishing to present her daughters to the Earl of Harrington, then Lord-Lieutenant, consulted Sheridan how she could procure the necessary dresses, which she had not the means to purchase. The difficulty was overcome by Sheridan arraying the distressed beauties out of the resources of the stage wardrobe ; and so Maria and Elizabeth Gunning made their first courtesies to the Lord-Lieutenant attired as Lady Macbeth and Juliet, and, as tradition states, looked most lovely. I wish it did not also state that, when they became great ladies, they proved forgetful of former kindness in their time of need on the part of the warm-hearted and improvident Sheridan.

The first mention that we find of the fair Gunnings as the 'Belles of the season' in London, is in a letter from Horace Walpole in June 1751, when he speaks of them as 'two Irish girls of no fortune, who make more noise than any of their predecessors since the days of Helen, and who are declared the handsomest women alive.' The fastidious Horace 'was willing to allow the truth of the statement if they were both taken together' ; though he adds, by way of qualification, that 'singly he has seen much handsomer women than either of them.' How this can be, however, is not clear to my dull comprehension.

There can be no doubt of the sensation caused by the two fair Gunnings wherever they went about London. They could not take a walk in the park, or spend an evening at Vauxhall, without being followed by such mobs as to force them to retreat and go home. One day when the sisters visited Hampton Court, the housekeeper, whether in sport or in earnest, showed the company who were 'lionising' the place into the room where the Miss Gunnings were sitting, instead of into the apartment known as the 'Beauty Room,' with the significant remark, 'These are the beauties, ladies.'

The fair sisters, the elder of whom had barely completed her eighteenth year at the time of which I am speaking, as may easily be imagined, did not long retain the humble patronymic which they had brought with them from Ireland and had rendered so famous. Elizabeth, the younger sister, drew the first prize in the matrimonial lottery; and the story of her courtship and marriage had best, perhaps, be told in Horace Walpole's own words, which let us into a scene in Mayfair Chapel in the days when marriages not *à la mode* were solemnised there. The old gossip writes to his friend Sir Horace Mann, at Florence, under date Feb. 27, 1752:—

'The event which has made the most noise since my last is the wedding of the younger Miss Gunning. . . . About six weeks ago the Duke of Hamilton, the very reverse of the Earl [of Coventry], but debauched, extravagant, and equally damaged in his fortune and in his person, fell in love with the youngest at a masquerade, and determined to marry her in the spring. About a fortnight since, at an immense assembly at Lord Chesterfield's, made to show [off] the house, which is really most magnificent, the Duke made love at one end of the room, while he was playing at pharaoh (*i.e.* faro) with the other: that is, he saw neither the bank nor his own cards, which were of 300*l.* each. He soon lost a thousand. I own I was so little a professor in love that I thought this parade looked ill for the poor girl, and could not conceive, if he was so much engaged with his mistress as to disregard

such sums, why he played at all. However, two nights afterwards, being left alone with her he found himself so impatient that he sent for a parson. The doctor refused to perform the ceremony without either a licence or a ring. The Duke swore he would send for the Archbishop. At last they were married with a ring of the bed-curtain, at half an hour after twelve, at Mayfair Chapel. The Scotch are enraged ; the women mad that so much beauty has had its effect ; and, what is most silly, my Lord Coventry declares that now he will marry the other. The Duchess was presented on Friday. The crowd was so great that even the noble mob in the Drawing Room clambered into chairs and on tables to get a look at her. There are mobs at their door to see them get into their chairs ; and people go early to get places at the theatres when it is known that they will be there.'

A few weeks after the marriage the Duke of Hamilton conducted his lovely bride to the home of his ancestors ; and so widely spread was the fame of the beautiful Duchess, even in those days when railways, penny postage, and daily newspapers were things unknown, that, when they stopped one night at a Yorkshire inn during their journey, 'seven hundred people sat up all night in and about the house merely to see the Duchess get into her post-chaise the next morning.'

There can be little doubt that Elizabeth Gunning's first marriage was prompted by ambition ; it could hardly have been a happy one, if we may credit Walpole's account of the Hamilton *ménage*. 'The Duchess of Hamilton's history,' says he, 'is not unentertaining. The Duke of Hamilton is the abstract of Scotch pride. He and the Duchess, at their own house, walk in to dinner before their company, sit together at the upper end of their own table, eat off the same plate, and drink to nobody beneath the rank of an earl. Would not one wonder how they could get anybody, either above or below that rank, to dine with them at all ?' It is indeed a marvel how such a host could find guests of any degree sufficiently wanting in self-respect to sit at his table and endure his

pompous insolence—the insolence of an innately vulgar mind, which, unhappily, is sometimes to be met even in the most exalted rank of life.

Let us now for the present leave Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton to the enjoyment of her conjugal felicity in the congenial society of her stately spouse, and see what had meanwhile befallen her sister Maria.

Maria Gunning, the elder, and, according to the general opinion, the lovelier, of the two sisters, on her first introduction to the *beau monde* of London was followed by a long train of aristocratic and noble admirers, among whom was the Earl of Coventry; 'a grave young lord of the remains of the patriot breed,' who long dangled after her. The wavering intention of the Earl was most probably decided by the example set him by one even of higher rank than himself; for the marriage of Elizabeth to his Grace of Hamilton was followed in less than three weeks by that of Maria to his lordship. Our old friend Horace Walpole comments in a most characteristic manner upon the notoriety of the fair sisters. After recording the fact of their marriages, he continues, 'There are two wretched women that are just as much talked of as the two beauties, a Miss Jefferies and a Miss Blandy; the one condemned for murdering her uncle, the other for the murder of her father.' Lady Gower, writing to a friend in the country shortly after the execution of these two criminals, and lamenting the lack of sufficient news to make her letter interesting, says: 'Since the two Misses were hanged (Blandy and Jefferies) and the other two Misses were married (the Gunnings), there is nothing at all talked of.'

Shortly after their marriage the Earl and Countess of Coventry, accompanied by Lady Caroline Petersham—another celebrated beauty, whose charms were, however, at this period somewhat on the wane—paid a visit to France. But the standard of beauty must have been widely different in the two countries at that time, for the English belles, doubtless to their own extreme amazement, found themselves entirely

at a discount in the French capital. 'Our beauties,' writes Walpole in October 1752, 'are returned, and have done no execution. The French would not conceive that Lady Caroline Petersham ever had been handsome, nor that my Lady Coventry has much pretence to be so now. Poor Lady Coventry,' he continues, 'was under piteous disadvantages; for, besides being very silly, ignorant of the world and good breeding, speaking no French, and suffered to wear neither red nor powder, she had that perpetual drawback upon her beauty—her lord, who is sillier in a wiser way, and as ignorant, speaking very little French himself, just enough to show how ill-bred he is.' It would have been well for Lady Coventry if she had never been suffered to wear 'red' or 'powder'; for it was to the lavish use of such cosmetics that the malady which caused her early death was attributed by her physicians.

The lovely Countess seems to have divided her time between her toilet and her amusements. On one occasion she exhibited to George Selwyn the costume which she was going to wear at an approaching *fête*. The dress was of blue silk, richly brocaded with silver spots of the size of a shilling. 'And how do you think I shall look in it, Mr. Selwyn?' asked the self-satisfied beauty. 'Why,' replied he, 'you will look like change for a guinea!'

Conspicuous in the list of this lady's adorers was Frederick St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, *à propos* of whom Walpole writes, March 2, 1754: 'T'other night they danced minuets for the entertainment of the King at the masquerade, and then he sent for Lady Coventry to dance. It was quite like Herodias; and I believe, if he had offered a boon, she would have chosen the head of St. John—I think I told you of her passion for the young Lord Bolingbroke.' A little later the Duke of Cumberland's admiration of Lady Coventry was the topic of conversation, according to that universal intelligencer from whom most of the gossip of the day has come down to us.

Many amusing stories are told of Lady Coventry's extreme silliness; one of the best of them is as follows: The old King

(George II.) asked her one evening if she was not sorry that there were to be no more masquerades. She replied that 'she was tired of them—indeed, that she was surfeited with most London sights; there was but one left that she wanted to see, and that was a coronation!' This wish (expressed with such *naïveté*) was not granted, for Lady Coventry died just a fortnight before the King.

The prestige of Lady Coventry's exceeding beauty attended her to the last. Only a few months before her death in 1760, she was so mobbed by a crowd of admiring plebeians while walking in the park, that the King ordered a guard to be always ready for the future, whenever Lady Coventry should be pleased to 'take her walks abroad.' Another letter-writer of the period, the Hon. J. West, gives an amusing description of the result of these precautions. 'Her ladyship went to the park, and, pretending to be frightened, directly desired the assistance of the officer of the guard, who ordered twelve sergeants to walk abreast before her, and a sergeant and twelve men behind her, and in this pomp did the idiot walk about all the evening, with more mob about her than ever, as you may imagine; her sensible husband supporting her on one side, and Lord Pembroke on the other. This is at present the talk of the whole town.'

Elizabeth Gunning, having become a widow in 1758, gave her hand, a twelvemonth later, to one Colonel John Campbell, then heir presumptive to the honours of the great ducal house of Argyll, and commenced married life for a second time under auspices even more brilliant and far happier than her first venture. Walpole writes of it as 'a match that would not disgrace Arcadia. Her beauty has made enough sensation, and in some people's eyes is even improved. He has a most pleasing person, countenance, manner; and, if they could but carry to Scotland some of our sultry English weather, they might restore the ancient pastoral life, when fair kings and queens reigned at once over their subjects and their sheep.'

It is a well-known fact, frequently mentioned by Chester-

field, Walpole, and other contemporary writers, that for the sake of Colonel Campbell, Elizabeth Gunning, in her year of widowhood, had rejected another ducal coronet, that of the Duke of Bridgewater.

But the career of the beautiful Countess was fast drawing to a close, and Walpole writes to a friend : 'The kingdom of beauty is in as great disorder as the kingdom of Ireland. My Lady Pembroke looks like a ghost. My Lady Coventry is going to be one.' Poor creature ! The heartless wit spoke only too truly.

One of the last occasions on which we hear of her appearance in public was at the trial of Earl Ferrers, in the House of Lords, in April 1760, for the murder of his steward. Walpole writes of this trial : 'The seats of the peeresses were not near full, and most of the beauties absent ; but, to the amazement of everybody, Lady Coventry was there, and, what surprised me much more, looked as well as ever. I sat next but one to her, and should not have asked her if she had been ill, yet they are positive she has few weeks to live. She and Lord Bolingbroke seemed to have different thoughts, and were acting over all the old comedy of eyes.'

Walpole's description of her death-bed is a most melancholy one. 'Poor Lady Coventry,' he writes, 'concluded her short race with the same attention to her looks. She lay constantly on a couch, with a pocket-glass in her hand ; and when that told her how great the change was, she took to her bed. During the last fortnight she had no light in her room but the lamp of a tea-kettle, and at last took things in through the curtains of her bed, without suffering them to be withdrawn.' The mob, who never quitted curiosity about her, went to the number of ten thousand only to see her coffin. Her married life extended over something more than eight years. She did not, however, pass away until she had borne to the Earl three children : two daughters, and also a son, George William, who became the seventh Earl of Coventry, and lived nine years into the present century.

I have before mentioned that Lady Coventry's early death was mainly attributed to her lavish use of cosmetics; and I find another terrible example of the same extraordinary infatuation in the pages from which I have already so largely quoted. Horace Walpole writes in 1762: 'That pretty young woman, Lady Fortrose, Lady Harrington's daughter, is at the point of death, killed, like Lady Coventry and others, by white lead, of which nothing could cure her.'

It will probably strike the reader of Horace Walpole's Letters that he speaks with undue harshness of Lady Coventry's ignorance and ill-breeding, when we consider the giddy height to which she had been raised from a life of obscurity, if not of poverty, at a very early age; the amount of adulation poured upon her by the highest personages in the land; and, above all, the fact that coarseness and ignorance were common failings among the aristocracy of that day, many of whom could scarcely spell at all.

At the time of her sister's death, in October 1760, the Duchess of Hamilton was in such bad health that her physicians apprehended a rapid decline, and ordered her to pass the winter abroad. Walpole speaks of her at this time as possessing 'but little remains of beauty'; her features, he adds, 'were never so handsome as Lady Coventry's, and she has long been changed, though not yet, I think, above six-and-twenty; the other was but twenty-seven.' The Duchess, however, recovered, and was one of the three ladies appointed to accompany the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz from Germany to England previous to her marriage with George III. It is said that when the young German bride arrived in sight of the palace of her future husband, she turned pale, and evinced such evident symptoms of terror as to force a smile from the Duchess of Hamilton, who sat by her side; upon which the young Princess briskly remarked, 'My dear Duchess, you may laugh, for you have been married twice; but it is no joke to me.'

The general respect in which the young Dowager Duchess of Hamilton was held at the time of her second marriage forced

an acknowledgment even from the censorious Walpole, that her merit was as conspicuous as her good fortune, and that the extraordinary sensation created by her beauty had not at all impaired the modesty of her behaviour. The Duchess of Hamilton became Duchess of Argyll in 1770, a change of title characteristically commented upon by Walpole, who observes that, 'as she is not quite so charming as she was,' he does not know 'whether it is not better than to retain a title which put one in mind of her beauty.' In 1776 she was created Baroness Hamilton of Hamilton, in Leicestershire, in her own right. She was one of the Ladies of the Bedchamber to Queen Charlotte, who, jealous of her undoubted favour with the King, treated her so badly that at one time she contemplated resigning her post. The Duke consented that she should do so, on condition that he might dictate the letter of resignation. The letter was accordingly written, but the Duchess, greatly dissatisfied with the terms employed, which by no means expressed her feelings, added a postscript to this effect: 'Though *I* wrote the letter, the Duke dictated it.' Ultimately the affair was arranged by the Duchess retaining her place.

Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton and of Argyll, was the wife of two dukes, and the mother of four. By her first husband she was mother of James, seventh Duke, and of Douglas, eighth Duke, of Hamilton; and by her second husband, of George, sixth Duke, and of John, seventh Duke, of Argyll. She died on the 20th December, 1790, and so terminated the history of the two fair Gunnings.

There is at Croome Court, the seat of the present Earl of Coventry, a fine portrait of Maria Gunning, and another of her 'double-duchessed' sister; the latter was also painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and sat to other artists. At Inverary Castle, Argyllshire, the seat of the Duke of Argyll, there is an authentic full-length portrait of Elizabeth Gunning (his Grace's grandmother) by Cotes, and another, also full-length, is to be seen at Hamilton Palace. I am given to understand that the present Duke of Argyll, the grandson of Elizabeth Gunning,

has two other portraits of his ancestress, both half-length, and that one of them is at his Grace's town residence at Campden Hill.

The 'fair Gunnings' were painted as companion pictures by Cotes in 1751, and also by Read; the latter pictures were both engraved by Finlayson, and other engravings of Maria and Elizabeth are to be seen in the British Museum. Read represents the Duchess in a lace mob cap and cloak, while an engraving by Houston portrays her as a country lass, with a rose in her bosom. Of Maria there is a portrait by Hamilton, whole-length, with a greyhound by her side. The two sisters are very much alike: both are remarkable for their small mouths, high foreheads, aquiline noses, and arched eyebrows. Certainly, Maria would be adjudged by the ladies nowadays the prettier in detail—she is slim and elegant, though rather inanimate; but I much prefer the looks of Elizabeth, who is darker, plumper, and more intelligent, and altogether a finer woman. I am told that there is also a mezzotint of 'the three Miss Gunnings,' but I have not been able to find a copy in the Print Room at the British Museum.

THE THELLUSSONS

It is stated as a fact, by a writer in the *Stock Exchange Review*, that 'at the end of the last century, when George the Third was King, and when Meyer Anselm Rothschild kept a broker's shop in the Jew Lane of Frankfort, there were six bankers in London who had each and all the repute of being possessed of extraordinary wealth, or what would now be termed millionaires. These six bankers,' he adds, 'were Thomas Coutts, Francis Baring, Joseph Denison, Henry Hope, Lewis Tessier, and Peter Thellusson.' I purpose in my present chapter to tell my readers a little about the last-named gentleman, what sort of will he made, and what became of his wealth, which at one time threatened to prove of fabulous

amount, to swallow up half the riches of his contemporaries, and to form the nucleus of a fortune which should fairly outstrip the Rothschilds and Esterhazys.

We are told by Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall, in his amusing 'Memoirs of My Own Time,' that George III. had a very great objection to raise to the peerage any member of a family engaged in commercial pursuits ; and it was long before he could be persuaded—even by his favourite 'heaven-born' minister, William Pitt—to break his resolution. The first to burst down the barrier of royal exclusiveness was Mr. Robert Smith, a banker in London, and the son of a banker at Nottingham, to whom Pitt was said to have been largely indebted for the 'sinews of war' in the earlier part of his career, and on whom, therefore, was conferred, in 1797, the title of Lord Carrington, or, as the family now spell it, Carington.

Another of the wealthy money-changers and money-brokers, whose fortunes were established by successful commerce east of Temple Bar, in the middle of the last century, was the aforesaid Peter Thellusson, who was born in 1735. Though not known to fame on this side the British Channel, yet, according to Sir Bernard Burke and the Heralds, the Thellussons trace back their origin to the *ancienne noblesse* of the kingdom of France. The first of the name of whom we hear anything in particular was Frederick de Thellusson, Seigneur de Fleschéres and Baron de Saphorin, one among the nobles who assisted Philip VI. of France in his expedition into Flanders early in the fourteenth century. His family still owned their hereditary estates at Fleschéres, near Lyons, up to the time of the great Massacre of St. Bartholomew, in August 1572, when they fell among the victims of that dreadful night. According to tradition, the only member of the family who escaped the slaughter was Theophilus de Thellusson, who had married a sister of the Count de Saluce, at that time the Governor of the city of Lyons ; he seems to have effected his escape into Savoy, and thence to Geneva, where he settled,

and his descendants at different times filled high places connected with the Republic of that city.

Isaac de Thellusson, who established himself as a banker in a good way of business there, and afterwards at Paris, and who was ambassador from his native city to the Court of France in the reign of Louis XV., had four sons, one of whom, Peter, became the great merchant of London, whom we have already named. His history is certainly a very singular one. The father had largely increased his business by taking into his employ as a clerk, and afterwards as a partner, a man subsequently celebrated in French history, M. Necker, the same who was Minister of Finance during the French Revolution. The firm accordingly became known as Messrs. Thellusson and Necker. The son had joined his father's banking-house in Paris when a young man; but as soon as the first throes of the Revolution made themselves felt, he resolved to seek a country where property would be more secure, and with that view to found in London a branch in connection with his father's business. His great and absorbing passion seems to have been to acquire a large fortune in hard cash; and many years had not elapsed ere Mr. Peter Thellusson found his sails swelling with the breezes of favouring fortune, for he succeeded in establishing one of the principal banking-houses in the City.

'A man of great sagacity and extraordinary perseverance,' writes Mr. F. Martin, 'coupled with a desire of making money, which amounted to an all-absorbing passion, Mr. Thellusson soon found success at his door, and in a few years built up one of the first banking establishments in the British metropolis.' But however great his wealth, he still yearned for more. Accordingly, unsated with the gold which he had accumulated, he resolved, as he knew that he could not live for ever himself, to try at least if he could not hand down a colossal fortune to his distant posterity, either entire or in three shares, he did not much care which. Probably such a will as he devised in order to effect that end had never been heard of,

or even dreamt of, before the year of grace 1797 : the sequel will prove that it is a good thing for society at large that there have not been many found to imitate his example ; and it is well that, although his will was allowed to stand, the recurrence of such a disposition was forbidden by a special Act of Parliament.

Towards the close of the last century, when he was still several years short of the allotted 'three score and ten,' he one day quietly took stock of his worldly possessions, and found that he was the owner of a clear 600,000*l.* in hard cash, besides an annual rent roll of 4,500*l.* He 'had satisfied the ordinary ambition of an English bourgeois—he had founded a family. Peter Isaac, the son of his youth and the prop of his house, was heir to 35,000*l.* a year in money and land, and might claim to be a born gentleman. Peers and peeresses might hereafter spring in intermediate succession from the loins of that denizen of a dingy little back parlour behind the bank. The best men upon 'Change envied the prosperous Peter Thellusson, who had no object of ambition unsatisfied. Peter himself was of a different mind : he had not nearly money enough. Let other men be content to found one family : Peter was lucky enough to have three sons, and he would found three families. It was not that he loved his sons, or his sons' sons ; but it was the hope and desire of this magnificent posthumous miser to associate his name with three colossal fortunes. If he did not love his sons, he did not hate them ; he was simply indifferent to everything except to his one cherished object.'

Accordingly he took the very best legal advice upon the subject, and made, as most men make, a will. By this he left about 100,000*l.* to his wife, his three sons, and three daughters —probably in order to show the world that no unnatural antipathy to his nearest relatives tainted his last dying testament with mania ; while the rest of his fortune, amounting to more than 600,000*l.*, was conveyed to trustees, who were to let it accumulate till after the deaths, not only of his children,

but of all the male issue of his sons and grandsons ; in fact, till every man, woman, and child of the offspring of Peter, and alive or begotten at Peter's decease, should be defunct. After that event the vast property, with its accumulations at compound interest, was to be given to the nearest male descendants who should bear the family name of Thellusson. No one of the children or grandchildren who had smiled in old Peter Thellusson's face, or had trembled at his presence, or had squalled at the sound of his hard, harsh voice, should be ever the better or richer for all his wealth. The money, divided into three equal parts, was to go to the eldest male descendant of his eldest, his second, and his third sons respectively. If there should be a failure in the male issue of any of the three, the share was to be divided among the representatives of the other two ; if a failure of two, then the three shares were to go as one vast property to the one survivor ; but should, after all, no lineal male descendants then remain, the whole was directed to be applied towards paying off a part of the National Debt ! This was the grandest part, perhaps, of all his scheme ; the very idea of it is bewildering to the ordinary business mind.

Having done what he pleased with his own, and excluded, like an unnatural parent, his own offspring from almost any share in the benefit of the estate which he held in trust for 'those of his own household,' he winds up his testament with a whining appeal to the Legislature, almost worthy of Shylock appealing against mercy ; he had earned his money by honest industry, and he humbly trusted that the two Houses of Parment would not alter his will. But, though man proposes, a higher Power disposes ; and this Mr. Thellusson's family learned speedily. With such intentions recorded in his will, which he duly signed and sealed, Peter Thellusson died ; but those intentions, like so many others in this world, were doomed to be frustrated. The family met after the funeral, and the will was opened, and created sensations which vibrated through the land in widening circles. Our law-books picture to us the

blank disappointment of the then living relatives, the gentle murmur of a past generation of lawyers, and the gaping wonder of the general public. There were then alive three sons and six grandsons of this malignant old merchant, 'all destined to live the life of Tantalus ; to see this great pagoda tree growing up before them, yet never to pluck one unit of its fruit.' The terms of the will enjoined that, when the last survivor of all the nine children and grandchildren should yield up his breath, then the charm was to end ; the great mountain of accumulated wealth was to be divided into three portions, and one-third was to be given to each of the 'eldest male lineal descendants' of his three sons. It is indeed strange to think that so shrewd a man should have had apparently no suspicion that his nearest relations would do anything rather than rest content under such a will, or that the Court of Chancery under Lord Eldon would not engulph in its wide jaws a good portion of his fortune under such tempting conditions. And so it came to pass that in something less than two years after Peter Thellusson was gathered to his fathers, two bills had been filed in Chancery impeaching the will, the one by his widow and children, and the other by his trustees.

But although the suits were unsuccessful, the will being allowed to stand good by the Lord Chancellor and the other judges of the court, who decided in favour of the testator, yet, for years after, members of the Bar found a rich mine which they were not unwilling to work in cases connected with the Thellusson will ; and only a few years of the present century had elapsed when poor Mrs. Thellusson, the widow, died—it is said of a broken heart.

To be brief, my Lords Loughborough, and Alvanley, and Eldon, allowed the litigation to go up to the House of Lords, by which the will was confirmed on appeal. The Legislature, however, afterwards took up the affair, and, although they would not set aside the will by an *ex post facto* law, they enacted that the power of devising property for the purpose of accumulation should be restrained in future to twenty-one

years after the death of the testator. It was calculated at the time that the Thellusson fund, if it had been left to accumulate as its founder had specified, could not have amounted to less than 19,000,000*l.* at the moment of distribution, and would very probably have reached the figure of 32,000,000*l.* But this calculation was rash. It was beautifully correct in theory and on paper, but would not work in practice; evidently, too, not a shadow of a doubt existed in his mind when he made the will, that by the simple process of allowing a large capital, locked up under the protection of the law, to accumulate through three generations, the wealth of the future Thellusson would swell into dimensions compared with which fortunes of kings and emperors would be mere beggarly fleabites. Unfortunately for himself, he had left out of his calculation one all-important item—the existence of an institution called the Court of Chancery, with its array of long-robed worshippers, all ready to claim a share in the interest and compound interest. The Court of Chancery so 'clipped and pollarded Peter Thellusson's oak that it was not much larger than when he left it.' Not only was there a Chancery suit to set aside the will, but there was a cross suit to have the trusts of the will performed under the direction of the Court of Chancery—a suit which at sixty years old was as lively as ever. Of course, there were also other suits: suits about post-testament acquisitions, about advowsons, &c. The last survivor of the nine lives died in February 1856.

The unhappy lady who was the wife of this selfish millionaire was a Miss Woodford, the daughter of Mr. Matthew Woodford, and sister of Sir Ralph Woodford, of Carlby, sometime M.P. for Evesham. She derived but little comfort from her husband's bank-notes, and owned with her last breath that the source of true happiness is not to be looked for in money-bags.

Seats in the House of Commons were found for all the three sons of Peter Thellusson; the Irish Barony of Rendlesham was conferred on the eldest, Peter Isaac, in 1806, and

three of this nobleman's sons having held the title in succession, the latter now belongs to his grandson, the fifth Lord Rendlesham.

But the many millions sterling which the great merchant had hoped would eventually come to his descendants, what has become of them? The money was never destined to be theirs in its integrity; and but a comparatively modest fortune remained, and still remains, to the house. Lord Rendlesham, the head of the family, held for some years a seat in the House of Commons, as one of the members for Suffolk, in which county he owns a fair estate; but though only ninety years have passed since old Peter Thellusson's death, there is now no banking-house which bears his name in the great world of London. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

THE NOBLE HOUSE OF CECIL

If Horace Walpole was allowed to manufacture such a word as 'double-duchessed' as an epithet to the fair Miss Gunning, who married successively the Dukes of Hamilton and Argyll, I suppose that I may be pardoned if I take a similar liberty and ask my readers to pardon me for giving them a brief account of the 'double-marquissed' House of Cecil. It is not often that two members of the same family are created Earls in a single day, and that their respective male descendants attain a still higher step in the peerage after a lapse of nearly two centuries. Yet such is the history of the Cecils, now Earls and Marquises of Exeter and of Salisbury.

And first it may strike my readers as strange that, though the name of Cecil is no older than the reign of Queen Mary, yet the ancestors of this two-fold marquisate were a very ancient stock; for did not Robert Sisilt assist Robert Fitz-Hamon in the conquest of Glamorganshire and Gower Land, under William Rufus? And did he not receive, in recompense for his services, the fair manor of Alterennes, in the

county of Hereford? And was not his son and heir Sir James Sisilt, of Beaufort, in the county of Glamorgan? and did he not fall at the siege of Wallingford, 'having then on him a vesture with his arms and ensigns in needlework, as they afterwards appeared on the tomb of his descendant, Gerard, in the Abbey of Dore,'—the same which were formally assigned by the King to his lineal descendant, Sir John Sisilt, and the same which are now borne by the Marquises of Exeter and of Salisbury, viz., 'Barry of ten, arg. and az., over all six escutcheons, three, two, and one, sa., each charged with a lion rampant, of the first'—the latter, adds Sir Bernard Burke, 'with a crescent for difference'? I pass over some seven or eight generations, and come to the above-named Sir John Sisilt, concerning whom Mr. Sharpe relates in his 'Present Peerage' that a fierce contest arose at Halidon Hill, in 1333, between him and Sir William de Fakenham respecting the arms thus heraldically described. On this occasion they were adjudged to Sir John by a commission from Edward III., who forbade the rival knights from meeting and doing battle for the shield in single and possibly in deadly combat. His great-grandson Philip appears to have spelt his name as Sicelt, which was again modernised into Cyssel by his son David, Sergeant-at-Arms and steward of the manor of Weston, in Northamptonshire, memorable in after-time as the place where Henry VII. parted with his daughter, the Lady Margaret, who eventually became the ancestress of the Stuart and Brunswick lines.

David's son Richard, who appears to have called himself indifferently Sitcell, Sicelt, or Syssel, was page and groom of the wardrobe to 'bluff King Hal' and Constable of Warwick Castle; and he attended Henry as one of his Court on his interview with Francis, King of France, on the Field of the Cloth of Gold. He is described as being 'of Burley,' and he certainly served as High Sheriff of Rutlandshire in 1539. He received from the Crown a grant of 300 acres in St. Martin's at Stamford, together with the site of St. Michael's Priory;

and he seems also to have purchased the manor of Esyngdon, or Essendon, in Rutlandshire, whence his grandson, the first Lord Salisbury, took the title of Lord Cecil of Essendon.

This gentleman was the father of a statesman whose name is familiar to every reader of the history of England under the reigns of the Tudors and Stuarts—William, Lord Burleigh. I will not, however, speak here of the great Burleigh in his capacity of a statesman, but only as a private individual. He was an ardent and zealous genealogist, when his public duties gave him time for such pursuits; and his labours or amusements in this direction, though they often related to other families than his own, were sometimes directed to researches into the early annals of his own house. An excessive eagerness for the credit of a noble ancestry was one of his foibles; and a leading antiquary of the day, taking advantage of the classical appearance of the newly-adapted name of Cecil, endeavoured to court his favour by gravely trying to trace his descent from a patrician house of ancient Rome—the *gens Cæcilia!*

Passing, however, from the realm of myth to that of plain prose and history, and coming to his early manhood, I find him, at the age of twenty-one, a student in Gray's Inn. Inclining strongly to the 'new faith,' he attracted King Henry's notice and favour by a successful disputation which he held with two intemperate chaplains of O'Neill, the Irish chieftain, as to the limits of the power of the Roman Pontiff. The King accordingly granted him the reversion of the office of 'custos brevium' in one of the courts of law; and his career henceforth forms part of English history. I will therefore dwell briefly on it, simply stating that, on the Protector Somerset establishing a Court of Requests in his own house, he appointed Sir William Cecil its first master. The latter subsequently followed his patron to Scotland, and on the field of Musselburgh he narrowly escaped death from a cannon-ball which passed close beside him. On his return south he was made Secretary of State, and sworn a member of the Privy Council. On the fall of Somerset he was sent to the Tower to

share his chief's imprisonment. Released thence, I find him restored to his high post, in which, says Sharpe, 'Queen Mary offered to retain him permanently if he would consent to abjure the Protestant faith ; this, however, he refused to do.' The rest of his story shall be told in the words of Sir Bernard Burke, which differ slightly from the above statement :

'Under the rule of Mary, though a very zealous reformist previously, Sir William, with all the tact of that renowned Churchman, the Vicar of Bray, doffed his Protestant mantle, and conformed to the ancient faith—outwardly, says his biographer, Dr. Nares, but certainly so far as engaging a Catholic domestic chaplain, humbling himself at the confessional, and kneeling before the altar of the Real Presence, constitute such a conformation. This outward demonstration proved not to have been assumed in vain, for we find the wily politician enjoying again the sunshine of royal favour, and actually nominated, with Lord Paget and Sir Edward Hastings, to conduct Cardinal Pole, then invested with a legatine commission, into England. In this reign Cecil represented the county of Lincoln in Parliament. Immediately upon the accession of Elizabeth, however, with whom he constantly corresponded, and on whose accession he was the first person of whom the new Queen sought advice, he became once more a staunch denouncer of Popish errors ; the star of his fortune arose, and few statesmen have been guided through a more brilliant course. His first official employment was the resumption of the secretary-of-stateship, and in that post so sensible was his royal mistress of his important services that she elevated him to the peerage, by the title of Baron Burleigh, in 1571, although at this period his private fortune does not appear to have been much advanced ; for by a letter written by himself just after his elevation he says that he is 'the poorest lord in England.' Soon after this, however, he obtained a post of more profit as well as honour, that of 'Master of the Court of Wards,' which he held along with his portfolio of State. A conspiracy was soon afterwards discovered against

his life, and the two assassins, Barney and Natter, declared at their execution that they were instigated by the Spanish ambassador, for which, and other offences, his Excellency was ordered to depart the kingdom. As a consolation for these perils, the secretary was honoured with the Order of the Garter in June 1572, and in the September following, at the decease of the Marquess of Winchester, was appointed Lord High Treasurer, and was Chancellor of the University of Cambridge for forty years, from 1558 to 1598.'

His mode of living, say contemporary writers, was in keeping with his rank and the custom of the times. 'He had four places of residence—his lodgings at Court, his house in the Strand, his family seat at Burleigh, and his own favourite seat of Theobalds, near Waltham Cross, to which he loved to retire from harness. At his house in London, he (when free) supported a family of fourscore persons, without counting those who attended him in public.

'He kept a standing table for gentlemen, and two other tables for those of a meaner condition,' says Sir Bernard Burke; and these were always served alike, whether he was in or out of town. Twelve times he entertained Elizabeth at his house, on more than one occasion for some weeks together; and as royal visits are rather expensive luxuries, and Elizabeth formed no exception to the rule (for they cost each between 1,000*l.* and 2,000*l.*), the only wonder is that his purse was not exhausted, and that he was able to leave his son 25,000*l.* in money and valuable effects, besides 4,000*l.* a year in landed estates. Be this, however, as it may, his son Thomas, who was raised to the earldom of Exeter in 1605, complained loudly of his poverty, which on one occasion he urged as an excuse for declining the honour of a step in the peerage, writing to the Attorney-General, that 'he was resolved to content himself with the estate (rank) which he had, of a baron, and that he found his estate little enough to maintain the degree he was in.'

It is somewhat strange to add that two years later he and

his younger brother, Robert, were both created earls, and on the very same day, May 4 ; Lord Burleigh taking the title of Exeter, and his brother that of Salisbury. It is still more strange that the younger brother on this occasion should have taken precedence of the elder, his patent having passed the Great Seal in the morning, while that of Lord Burleigh, it is said, did not take effect till the afternoon or evening. This accident is reported to have occasioned some ill blood between the brothers at the time, though they were soon reconciled by finding themselves obliged to make common cause against the satirists of the age, who were not slow to attack the twin earls of yesterday, as mere courtiers and place-hunters, and men of no great family pretensions.

On this subject the old Lord High Treasurer had always been most tenacious ; and his sons, it would seem, followed his example. At all events, in the Harleian MSS. I find the following curious letter from Lord Exeter, evidently written at this time, which is well worth giving here at length, on account of its bearing on the mooted question of the difference between a 'Gentleman' and an 'Esquire :'

'There is some cause of late fallen out of one that gives reproachful words to my brother, and therewithal said that it was a strange thing that such a one as he, whose grandfather was a sieve-maker, should rule the whole state of England ; and though the malice of the party was towards him, yet I must be likewise sensible thereof myself, both being descended from him ; therefore I have thought good to require you forthwith to take the pains to make search in my study at Burghley, amongst my boxes, of my evidences, and I think you will find the very writ itself by which my grandfather or great-grandfather, or both, were made sheriffs of Lincolnshire or Northamptonshire, and likewise a warrant from the Duke of Suffolk, in King Henry VIII.'s time, to my grandfather and old Mr. Wingfield, that dead is, for the certifying touching the fall of woods in Clyff Park or Rockingham Forest, by the

name of David Cecyle *Esquire* ; which title at those days was not used but to such that were gentlemen of note, where commonly they were entitled but by the name of *gentlemen*. If you have any record of your own to show the descent of my great-grandfather, I pray you send a note thereof likewise. My lord my father's altering the writing of his name maketh many that are not very well affected to our house to doubt whether we be rightly descended from the house of Wales, because they write their names 'Sitsilt,' and our name is written 'Cecyle ;' my grandfather wrote it 'Syssell ;' and so in orthography all these names differ, whereof I marvel what moved my lord my father to alter it. I have my lord's pedigree very well set out, which he left unto me. I pray you let this be secret unto yourself, which my brother of Salisbury desired me so to give in charge unto you ; and so I commend you very kindly unto yourself and my good aunt, your wife ; from London, this 13th of November, 1605.

'Your very loving cousin and friend,

'Exeter.

'To Hugh Allington, Esquire.'

Lord Exeter, who always maintained an unblemished character among statesmen who were not all free from blemish, was certainly a man of high talents and good sense ; and he did well in contenting himself with the reflected dignity of his father's splendid name, and in leaving it to his brother to emulate it in the exercise of the higher offices of statecraft.

Robert, the younger brother, the Earl of Salisbury, successively Secretary of State and Lord High Treasurer—as his father had been before him—married a sister of the unhappy Henry Brooke, Lord Cobham, and died, worn out with the cares of public office and political life, within six years after gaining his coronet. In his last illness he was heard to say to Sir Walter Cope, 'Ease and pleasure quake to hear of death ; but my life, full of cares and miseries, desireth to be dissolved.' He had some years previously addressed a letter

to Sir James Harrington, the poet, in pretty much the same tone. 'Good knight,' saith the minister, 'rest content, and give heed to one that hath sorrowed in the bright lustre of a court, and gone heavily on even the best-seeming fair ground. 'Tis a great task to prove one's honesty and yet not mar one's fortune. You have tasted a little thereof in our good queen's time, who was more than a man, and, in truth, sometimes less than a woman. I wish I waited now in your presence-chamber, with ease at my food and rest in my bed. I am pushed from the shore of comfort, and know not where the winds and waves of a court will bear me. I know it bringeth little comfort on earth ; and he is, I reckon, no wise man that looketh this way to heaven.'

His son and successor continued the younger line of the Cecils as Earls of Salisbury through six generations, when James, the seventh earl, was raised in 1789 to the Marquisate by George III., on the recommendation of Mr. Pitt. The grandson of this nobleman (I may remark by way of parenthesis) is the present Marquis of Salisbury, now Premier, and Chancellor of the University of Oxford. But to return. Twelve years more were destined to elapse before the like honour of a marquis's coronet was extended to the elder branch of the Cecils, of Burleigh, and of Exeter. Around this elder house, however, there is a great halo of romance.

I have already acquainted my readers that the two sons of the great Lord Burleigh were raised in one day by James I. to the earldoms of Salisbury and Exeter, and that in 1789 the younger line, that of Salisbury, exchanged an earl's coronet for that of a marquis. The same good fortune befell the head of the elder house in 1801, when Henry, tenth Earl of Exeter and eleventh Lord Burleigh, was advanced one step in the peerage of the United Kingdom, by the favour of George III. and Mr. Pitt, by the 'name, style, and title' of Marquis of Exeter. There is really not much to say about the intermediate earls, except that they were severally born, succeeded to the family coronet and pew in church, married, begot children,

died, and 'slept with their fathers.' But the case was far different with Earl Henry, who, probably without ever intending or even dreaming of such a thing, suddenly found himself the hero of a romance of real life, or rather the actor of the leading part in a drama of rural and peasant existence.

Born in the year 1754, the only son, and, indeed, the only child, of the Hon. Thomas Chambers Cecil, by his marriage with Miss Charlotte Gardner, Henry Cecil, at the age of nineteen, found himself at once an orphan and presumptive heir to the titles and estates of an old uncle who did not care for him a rush, and towards whom probably he felt very little affection or regard. At all events, no love was lost between them ; so while the old earl lived the young man kept pretty clear of Burleigh and all its belongings, and travelled through various parts of England, rather enjoying a life of quiet and homely adventure than otherwise. He did not join the gipsies, as did Bampfylde Moore Carew ; nor did he elope with an actress or some foreign duchess, as many young men would have done had they been left their own masters at an equally early age, and been known to have good pecuniary prospects. On the contrary, he married, quietly and soberly, into a good county family of the West of England, choosing as his bride the pretty Miss Vernon, only child of the squire of Hanbury Hall, in Worcestershire. But the young lady did not answer his expectations ; and in June 1791, when he was just seven-and-thirty, he petitioned for and obtained a divorce. This judgment made him again a free man ; and he resolved, having been once 'taken in and done for,' to look about for a second wife at his leisure, and to choose no one of whom he was not sure that he could mould her to his own tastes and ways, and that he would find in her a pattern of conjugal affection and domestic virtue. 'Courts, and courtiers, and coronets,' he would say, at all events to himself, 'are all very well in their way ; but their way is not my way ; and, if I can only find a plain, homely, and truly virtuous maiden, in whatever sphere

of life I discover her, in hall, in manor-house, in parsonage, or in cottage, then I swear with King Cophetua,

This beggar-maid shall be my queen.'

How far he was true to his oath the sequel will serve to show. I must ask my readers to accompany me—mentally, of course—to a charming country village in Shropshire, nestling among green lanes and fruitful apple-orchards, and called Bolas Magna; it is not far from Wellington and Newport, and within six or seven miles of that well-known inland beacon, the Wrekin.

It was a fine evening in the month of July 1791, when the grass had been all mown and the hay had been made, and when the harvest had not commenced, that a stranger, apparently between thirty and forty years of age, stopped at the gate of a small farmer and shopkeeper in the village of Bolas. It was by no means a very usual thing to see a stranger in so retired a place, and at first the good man and his wife, who stood at the door, were inclined to refuse the hospitality which he asked. He certainly looked like a gentleman, at all events like a decent person; but what could a gentleman or any person be doing, wandering about a strange village, five miles at least from the nearest town, at such an hour? In spite of the evident suspicion of his *bona fides* which was entertained by both of the old folks, the stranger urgently yet courteously pressed his demands, begging that at least he might be allowed to stay in their cottage till morning, even if he had only a chair to 'rest upon in their lower room.' He did not require a bed; but it was clear that a heavy thunderstorm was coming on, and surely they would not force him to go on his way in the midst of the rain and storm? At last the boon was granted, though it must be owned somewhat grudgingly; and next morning the guest who had thus forced himself upon them in their little 'castle' made the formal acquaintance of honest Thomas Hoggins and his wife. Ah! it is not only in the olden time, or only in the regions of the

distant East, that people have 'entertained angels unawares.' The stranger's pleasure in the society of Mr. and Mrs. Hoggins no doubt was enhanced by the appearance at the breakfast-table of their daughter, Sarah, a rustic beauty of seventeen, a distant sight of whom on the previous evening, as she washed up 'the things' in the kitchen, had fairly enchained his eyes and his heart. The adventure of an hour, connected with crooked roads and coming night, was about suddenly to affect the wanderer's future life, and still more so that of the village maiden who alternately sat beside him and waited on her parents and their unknown guest.

Breakfast was over; but from that humble cottage where he had slept in a chair in the parlour, from those fields where Sarah Hoggins milked the cows, and from that dairy where her fair hands churned the cream into butter, Mr. Jones—for so the stranger styled himself—could not be persuaded to stir. He was a puzzle and a mystery; and there was no Œdipus at hand to solve the riddle of his being—who he was and where he came from. In answer to all inquiries, he spoke vaguely and unsatisfactorily; at last he said he was an 'undertaker,' or something of the kind, taking refuge in the vagueness of the term. Possibly such a vocation might serve to account for the air of tender melancholy which seemed to surround him; or possibly the word might have been meant as a gentle hint to Sarah Hoggins that, stranger as he was, he was ready to undertake any office, however new to him or he to it, in which she herself bore a part. Tennyson, who has made the story which I am about to tell familiar to most English readers, true to the poetic art, makes him out as calling himself not an 'undertaker' but a 'landscape painter.'

A week or two passed, and by the arrival of harvest-time the presence of Mr. Jones in the village had already become a fixed idea. The inhabitants looked upon him with a respectful fear. As weeks went on, he made occasional absences from Bolas; these were always short, and confined to two or three days; and on his return he seemed to abound with money.

The natives of Salop are not dull. They put the money and the absences together, and they whispered the result to one another. They felt sure Jones was a highwayman, and possibly the tortuous and tree darkened lanes, and the stories of highwaymen and footpads on the roads around Bolas Magna, may have made the robber idea unpleasantly credible. Probably they did not reflect that such a sparse country, so rarely visited by strangers, would not support a single footpad unless he possessed a large capital and could afford to abide the event.

After awhile, Mr. Jones or Mr. Cecil—we may as well drop the *alias*—became the avowed suitor of Sarah Hoggins ; but the notion that he was a highwayman still clung to her mother's mind, and she sturdily set her face against the connection. The father's logic was simple, and ultimately prevailed : 'Why, my dear, he has plenty of money.'

He showed his easy circumstances, indeed, by taking land, and by buying a site, on which he erected the largest house in the neighbourhood, now called Burleigh Villa. It stands amongst fields, facing the Wrekin, some seven miles distant from that landmark.

The wooing and the love-making of Mr. Cecil were brief ; for on October 3, just as harvest was over, and the orchards were being stripped of the apples for cider, he and Sarah Hoggins were married in the little church of Bolas. But still who Henry Cecil was, and what was his parentage, remained a mystery to all, even to Sarah herself. They still continued to live on in the village—it is said in the old folks' house. Next year a little daughter was born to them, but died when only a few days old. She was buried in the little churchyard ; but the grave is now forgotten.

A little more than two years passed by, and, in spite of the mystery which surrounded him, the respectability of Mr. Cecil's manners and conduct began to inspire the villagers of Bolas with confidence, so that they even appointed him to a post of trust as overseer, or churchwarden, or parish-constable. During this time, he was careful to supply by educa-

tion all the accomplishments which might be supposed to be wanting in a peasant-girl who had become a wife and a mother.

He was thus circumstanced, when, towards the end of December 1793, when he had been married a little over two years, he read in a country paper the tidings of the death of his uncle, the old earl. His presence, he knew, would now be required at Burleigh—

Burghley House by Stamford Town;

and though it was the depth of winter, he resolved to travel thither, taking his wife with him, and to give her an agreeable surprise. From Bolas, accordingly, one fine morning in January, having said good-bye to Mr. and Mrs. Hoggins, Henry Cecil and his wife, now just nineteen years of age, set out on horseback for a destination of which she was ignorant. Her husband merely told her that he was called on business into Lincolnshire, and that she must accompany him. Like a good and trustful wife, she at once obeyed his wish, and made the journey seated, as was the fashion of the day, on a pillion behind him. They rode on through Cannock Chase, past Lichfield and Leicester, stopping at various gentlemen's and noblemen's seats on the road, till at last they came within sight of a noble Elizabethan mansion situated in a lordly park.

Sarah Cecil gazed in admiration, and quietly remarked, 'What a magnificent house!'

'How should you like, my dear Sally, to be mistress of such a place?' was her lord's reply.

'Very much indeed, if we were rich enough to live in it.'

'I am glad that you like it; the place is yours. I am Earl of Exeter, and you are not plain Mrs. Cecil, but my Countess.'

She could scarcely believe her ears; but she could not mistrust the fond and honest words of her husband. The mystery of the last two years was solved at last—to her at

least. Mr. Cecil was no highwayman, that she knew already; but a painter of landscapes he might be. It was, however, indeed strange news to her that he was one of the proud peers of England, and that she had the coronet of a countess for her own. In a few minutes they reached the great entrance; and there was a fresh trial for her nerves, as a crowd of powdered servants came forward to recognise their new lord and master, who lost no time in presenting to them their future mistress.

This journey has been immortalised by Tennyson in his ballad of 'The Lord of Burleigh:'

Thus her heart rejoiceth greatly
Till a gateway she discerns,
With armorial bearings stately,
And beneath the gate she turns;

Sees a mansion more majestic
Than all those she saw before;
Many a gallant, gay domestic
Bows before him at the door;

And they speak in gentle murmur
When they answer to his call,
While he treads with footstep firmer
Leading on from hall to hall.

And while now she wonders blindly,
Nor the meaning can divine,
Proudly turns he round and kindly,
'All of that is mine and thine.'

Here he lives in state and bounty,
Lord of Burleigh fair and free,
Not a lord in all the county
Is so great a lord as he.

The news of the romantic story spread like wildfire throughout the neighbourhood, and the curiosity of the three counties of Lincoln, Rutland, and Northampton, which all meet within a few miles of Burleigh, was soon gratified by witnessing the entry of the peasant girl of Bolas upon the new sphere of life to which Providence had raised her without her own seeking.

The happiness of the Earl and his Countess was un-

alloyed : she did ample justice to his choice, and became the partner of his joys and of his sorrows. But their married life was brief. Besides their first-born, who lies buried at Bolas, Sarah Hoggins had three children—a daughter and two sons. The younger son, Lord Thomas Cecil (after giving birth to whom she died in childbed) lived till 1873 ; the elder son inherited his father's earldom, and also the marquisate conferred on him in 1801, as already stated ; the daughter married the Right Hon. Henry Manvers Pierrepont, by whom she was the mother of Lady Charles Wellesley, who is again the mother of the head of the house of Wellesley. Thus, strangely enough, the present Duke of Wellington is the great-grandson of the peasant-girl who in 1791 milked cows and churned cream in the village of Bolas Magna !

A friend of mine, who a few years ago travelled in Shropshire, sent me at the time so graphic a description of a pilgrimage which he then made to the scene of this romance that I venture to give part of it in his own words to my readers :

' Whilst on a visit, a fortnight since, in Shropshire, in sight of that cynosure of neighbouring eyes, the Wrekin, I found myself near the scene of one of the most romantic pages in the history of the English Peerage. On a pleasant September afternoon, when the sunlight was bathing the broad pastures, tinging the apples and damsons on the heavily-laden trees, and falling ruddy on the sides of red stone quarries, I bent my steps in the direction of the little village of Bolas Magna —not without some misgivings of losing my way among the little-frequented country-roads which lead thither. But a story that Moore has sung, and which has furnished Tennyson with the subject of one of his best poems, was inducement enough to make me strive against my terrible want of topographical acumen, to pace the very spot so consecrate to love, and, if possible, converse with the remaining few who still recall persons and events dating more than seventy years ago.'

After telling the story, much as I have told it to my readers, my friend proceeds :

'My walk led me past Burleigh Villa. It is a substantial brick house, the front diversified by two bays; and attached to it are good offices and farm-buildings. A wealthy farmer now occupies it; and, as if still to connect the tradition of Cupid and Hymen's doings with the house, its master, the morning I paid my visit to the spot, had led a third bride to the saffron-coloured altar. Crossing the little river Muse, I entered the village of Great Bolas. It is the *beau idéal* of an English hamlet—clean, picturesque, not fine, and with no excitement about it. There are hundreds like it scattered through our land. The houses, and they are few, are thatched, and irregularly placed. I entered one, which possessed a spacious lower room, beautifully neat and comfortable. Like many Shropshire houses, it had a fire burning under a boiler to prepare turnips for the cattle. Joining the cottage garden was a churchyard. The church is a small, uninteresting structure of red stone, but which, from its colour, at a little distance harmonises well with a clump of trees standing close to it. On the ground, which falls away rather steeply from the northern wall of the inclosure, stood Hoggins' farm, of which the only memorials remaining are a wicket by which it was approached, and a well. The old man whose house I entered was parish clerk. Even he had forgotten the grave of the first-born child; but he was well acquainted with the circumstances of this story. His wife, who was ill in bed, recollected the persons of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil. Unable to converse with this link between the past and the present, I was more fortunate, in walking from the village, to meet an aged woman, her chin adorned with a grey beard, whose memory retained not only the action, but the persons of the drama.

'The picture of the "Peasant Countess," in the billiard-room at Burleigh House, represents her as very beautiful: the pencil of Lawrence would hardly do less for so interesting a sitter; but my inquiries as to her beauty raised no enthusiastic response. The old woman would not even admit that she was

handsome. "She might have been well-looking," was the extent of her praise. A male informant told me he believed Sarah Hoggins was a "straight lass." Shade of Hogarth! What a description of beauty!'

The poet has beautifully described the drooping of a flower removed from its native air into a higher level. He has said that the village maiden received with extreme grace the homage and love of those about her; yet that her heart was being eaten out by yearnings for the little village and the old farm, and the simple faces of those among whom she lived in the days of her youth. These influences may have contributed somewhat towards her early death; but the immediate cause took effect in childbirth, and happened only a very few years after she had arrived at her honours, at the early age of twenty-four.

And a gentle consort made he,
  And her gentle mind was such
That she grew a noble lady,
  And the people lov'd her much.

But a trouble weigh'd upon her
  And perplex'd her night and morn,
With the burden of an honour
  Unto which she was not born.

Faint she grew and ever fainter,
  And she murmured, 'Oh, that he
Were once more that landscape painter
  Which did win my heart from me!'

So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
  Fading slowly from his side;
Three fair children first she bore him,
  Then before her time she died.

The school of Werther is not a numerous school among our English nobility, whether titled or untitled; but even at the time of Mr. Henry Cecil's love adventure, the spirit of romanticism had penetrated the French and German nations, and also, to some extent, the English. But whether it was the cause or the effect of that revolutionary earthquake which

eighty years since was rocking the people of Europe, at all events it had subsided along with those wild political enthusiasms which stirred many fine souls to their lowest depths. For the most part, the alliances of 'the Upper Ten Thousand' nowadays are made upon considerations which effectually shut out all chance of a rustic love, however real and genuine, ending in matrimony. Nevertheless, from the day when King Cophetua wedded the 'beggar-maid' down to the present hour, a few sporadic cases have occurred in high circles in which love, as a kind of eccentricity, I suppose, has broken through the cold and calculating rules which prevail under our social code. And yet, who can say how much benefit some noble families have gained by the transfusion into their veins of a little admixture of plebeian blood, red with country health and free from the taint of courts and cities?

The romantic tale of Sarah Hoggins, with only a few variations, has also been popularised in another way, namely, as an oratorio which has been performed with much success at more than one Musical Festival—for instance, at Birmingham in 1875, when it achieved a great success. It was thus described at the time:

'The story illustrated in music by the composer, Signor Schira, is a pleasing and graceful one, and the music makes an admirable match to the words. The subject is essentially pastoral and fanciful, a theme which novelists and poets in all ages have loved to tell, in both simple prose and in ambitious verse. A powerful lord, "the Lord of Burleigh," in one of his wanderings in quest of subjects to fill his sketch-book, under the modest title of his Christian name, has wooed and won the affections of a simple rustic beauty, named Marian. On the conclusion of the marriage festivities the artist-nobleman and his bride set out, professedly to seek their fortunes, accompanied only by Marian's old playmate, Constance. On their journey they turn aside, led seemingly by an idle impulse, to survey a lordly mansion, near which the road passes, when, to the amazement of Marian, her husband conducts her through

the gates, not only without opposition, but with every mark of respect and welcome from the attendants. Cecil then flings off his disguise, and avows his stratagem, secure in the conviction that Marian loves him for himself alone; but the burden of the state to which she is so suddenly lifted weighs heavily upon his rustic bride, and the happiness of the lovers is shortly ended by the decline and death of Marian,

> Who, like a lily drooping,
> Bows down her head and dies

—a termination sad enough to satisfy the most ardent lovers of the "tear-compelling ballad," and sufficiently suggestive of variety to give the utmost charm when set to characteristic music; and as Signor Schira approached his task in the spirit of both poet and musician, the successful result already spoken of was a matter for little surprise. The character of the music is so happy in form and treatment that the mind is put to no effort to conjure up the several scenes as the music progresses. Now we can see the bridal procession winding down the green hill to the valley in which the moss-covered village church stands, grey with age, the bride and bridegroom, truly "a comely couple," answering with glowing eyes the kind greetings on all sides, and then the quaint old mansion, bearing evidence of strength needed in a former time, when every lord's house was of necessity his castle, the wondering wife passing through lines of obsequious servants, and marvelling at the vast amount of respect with which she and her painter-lover are welcomed; then the effects of transplanting the lovely flower of the field into the richer parterre of the garden; the sickness and death of Marian follow with a sad swiftness, making the story like an April day—

> Begun with a smile,
> To end with a sigh.'

LAURENCE, EARL FERRERS

Among the noblest and the proudest of our old English families deservedly stand the Shirleys, of Shirley, in Derbyshire; of Staunton Harold, in Leicestershire; of Chartley, in Staffordshire; of Eatington, or Etington, in Warwickshire; and of half a dozen other places, which are enumerated in the 'Landed Gentry' of Sir Bernard Burke, who assigns to them an unbroken descent from the Anglo-Saxon days. And with good reason too; for does not that learned antiquary Sir William Dugdale himself say that 'the name of their ancestor, Sewallis de Etingdon, argues him to have been of the old stock'? The fact is that the lordship of Etingdon, or (as it is now termed) Eatington or Etington, was granted by William the Conqueror to one of his Norman followers, who appears to have left Sewallis in peaceful possession of his lands, though doubtless in nominal dependence on himself. In the course of years, possibly, the Norman lords being absentees, and not looking well to their own interests, the descendants of Sewallis contrived to make good their hold, and to play first fiddle instead of second. At all events, at a very early date under our Norman sovereigns, the acknowledged lords of Eatington were Shirleys; and Mr. Sewallis Shirley, the younger, of Etington, was lately one of the representatives of Warwickshire in Parliament, as his father and grandfather were before him.

Sir Ralph de Shirley held the manor of Eatington, and was also member for Warwickshire, in the reign of Edward I.; and his descendants, the lords of Eatington, took an active part in the Wars of the Roses and with France: and if any of my readers desire to know more on the subject, they will find ample information anent the family in three distinct MS. histories of the House of Shirley in the British Museum.

In the eighteenth generation from the above-named Saxon thane—as Dugdale styles him—I come to Sir Robert Shirley,

a gallant knight and Privy Councillor in the time of William and Mary, who, having inherited the ancient barony of Ferrers de Chartley, in right of his mother, Dorothy, daughter and heiress of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, the unfortunate favourite of Elizabeth, was raised in 1711 to the Earldom of Ferrers, and whose shield was destined to receive a melancholy tarnish in the person of one of his grandsons, whose story I come to tell.

The first Earl's eldest son dying without leaving issue male, the title passed to his second son, Henry, and, as he died unmarried, it devolved in due course on Laurence Shirley, eldest son of his third son, the Hon. Laurence Shirley, by his wife Anne, daughter of Sir Walter Clarges, Bart.—probably one of the family after whom Clarges Street, Piccadilly, is named. Even as a boy it is recorded of him that he was of a moody and passionate temper, and that at times he had but little control over his words or his deeds. His uncle, whose death placed the coronet on his head, had been in confinement under a statute of lunacy, and, after a short return of reason, relapsed into a state of incurable madness, which ended only with his life. One of his aunts, too—the Lady Barbara Shirley—was confined as a lunatic. The young lord himself was so far a sharer in the hereditary disorder of his family as to be subject, even after he grew to manhood, to sudden, causeless, and outrageous passions. According to a writer in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' he would walk hastily about the room, clenching his fists, grinning, biting his lips, and talking to himself, without having anything to ruffle his temper, and without being under the influence of liquor. He would also talk to himself incoherently for hours and hours after he had gone to bed. Nor was this all: he would entertain all sorts of groundless delusions and suspicions of those round about him; he would go about secretly armed with a dagger or a brace of pistols; when spoken to he was absent, and often would not reply; he would make odd mouths before a looking-glass, and spit upon it, and use all sorts of strange gestures, as if he was bewitched. It

appears, too, that he had contracted a habit of drinking strong liquors while making what was then called the 'Grand Tour,' without which no member of 'the quality' was considered to have finished his education.

In 1752 the eccentric nobleman had married a daughter of Sir William Meredith; but, though she was of a mild and gentle disposition, he treated her with great brutality. Nor was his wife the only member of his family to whom he so behaved himself. He was on ill terms with almost all his relations, and appears to have been a nuisance to the neighbourhood and to himself. One day when his brother William, a clergyman, got up from the table, not choosing to sit longer over the bottle, and joined the ladies in the drawing-room, he followed him, and, standing with his back to the fire, broke out into a violent rage, and insulted him in the presence of the company, though there was not a shadow of pretext for any such treatment. The fact was that his hereditary tendency to insanity had been fostered and cherished by a fond and foolish mamma, who had allowed the dear boy to have his own way in everything when a child, and would not permit his father to correct him. His temper had not been improved by a legal separation which his wife had lately obtained from him by an Act of Parliament, which had also authorised the appointment of a person to receive the income of his estates, and to control his expenditure. So eccentric, indeed, had he become that his family solicitor, a Mr. Goostrey, declined any longer to act for him, and that, on account of an absurd and groundless quarrel which he contrived to pick with Sir Thomas Stapleton when staying in Lord Westmoreland's house, his relatives had held a cabinet council to discuss the question of applying for a commission of lunacy to be issued against him. From this step, however, it appears that they were deterred by the fact that he enjoyed long intervals of sanity, and that if they should fail they would be in danger of being sentenced to pay a heavy fine as guilty of *scandalum magnatum*.

It appears, too, that about this period he took up his abode

in lodgings at Muswell Hill, near Highgate and Hornsey, where he kept all sorts of low company, whom he amused, no doubt, by his vulgar and eccentric conduct. He would drink coffee out of the spout of a kettle, mix his beer and porter with mud, and shave one side of his face only. He threatened on more than one occasion to 'do for' his landlady upon the most trifling provocation in the world ; and on one occasion he violently broke open on a Sunday a stable where his horse was locked up, knocking down with his fist the ostler's wife when she asked him to wait a few minutes while her husband brought the key. During this time, however, he managed his own affairs with shrewdness and penetration, so that Mr. Goostrey said it would be easier to cheat anyone in the county than the Earl, and that he was as sharp as any member of either House of Parliament in dealing with such a matter as the cutting off of an entail.

Mr. Cradock, in his 'Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs,' speaks of his lordship as all but a madman. He writes:

'I still retain a strong impression of the unfortunate Earl Ferrers, who, with the Ladies Shirley, his sisters, frequented Leicester Races, and visited at my father's house. During the early part of the day, his lordship preserved the character of a polite scholar and a courteous nobleman, but in the evening he became the terror of the inhabitants ; and I distinctly remember running up stairs to hide myself, when an alarm was given that Lord Ferrers was coming armed, with a great mob after him. He had behaved well at the ordinary ; the races were then in the afternoon, and the ladies regularly attended the balls. My father's house was situated midway between Lord Ferrers' lodgings and the Town Hall, where the race assemblies were then held : he had, as was supposed, obtained liquor privately, and then became outrageous ; for from our house he suddenly escaped and proceeded to the Town Hall, and, after many most violent acts, threw a large silver tankard of scalding negus amongst the ladies ; he was then secured for that evening. This was the last time of his appearing at Leicester, till

brought from Ashby-de-la-Zouch to prison there. It has been much regretted by his friends that, as Lady Ferrers and some of his property had been taken from him, no greater precaution had been used with respect to his own safety, as well as that of all around him. Whilst sober, my father, who had a real regard for him, always urged that he was quite manageable ; and when his sisters ventured to come with him to the races, they had an absolute reliance on his good intentions and promises.'

Such was the character of Laurence, third Earl Ferrers, in the early part of the year 1760, when the tragic events which I am about to record took place. When it was ordered by the Court of Chancery that the rents due to Lord Ferrers should be paid to a receiver, the nomination of the said receiver was left to his lordship, who of course hoped to find in that person a pliant tool, who would take things easily, and let him have his own way. The person whom he so appointed was a Mr. John Johnson, his own steward, who had been in the service of the Shirleys for many years—even from boyhood. But he soon found out that Johnson would not oblige him at the expense of his honesty and his duty ; and accordingly from that time he conceived an inveterate hatred towards him on account of the opposition which he offered to his crotchets. He never spoke of him except in terms of abuse and resentment, not to say with savage oaths ; vowing that he had conspired with his enemies to do him a mortal injury, and was a villain, a scoundrel, and so forth. Further, he gave him warning to quit a farm of which he had long been tenant, and of which the trustees of the Ferrers estates had recently renewed the lease. But in this matter he could not get his own way, and from that time he resolved to move heaven and earth to obtain his revenge, even though he should have to 'bide his time.' He dissembled his feelings, however, so cleverly, that poor Johnson was led to believe that he never stood on better terms with the Earl, who all the while was meditating how to get rid of him.

In January 1760, Lord Ferrers was at his seat of Staunton Harold, about two miles from Ashby-de-la-Zouch. His household consisted of a Mrs. C——, who lived with him nominally as his housekeeper, her four daughters, and five domestic servants—three maids, a boy, and an old man. Mr. Johnson's farmhouse, The Mount, was about a mile off across the park. On Sunday, the 18th of that month, Lord Ferrers called on Mr. Johnson, and, after some discourse, desired that he would come to him at Staunton on the following Friday at three o'clock in the afternoon. The Friday came round ; and Johnson was true to his appointment. His lordship's dinner-hour —like that of most country gentlemen of the time—was two o'clock ; and rising early from table, shortly before the appointed hour, he desired Mrs. C—— to take the children for a walk, arranging that they were to return at five or half-past five o'clock, as the evenings were dark. The two men-servants also he contrived to get out of the way on different pretexts ; so that when Mr. Johnson arrived there was no one in the house except the maids.

Three o'clock struck ; punctual to his promise, Mr. Johnson knocked and rang the bell, and was ushered by the parlour-maid, Elizabeth Burland, into his lordship's private sitting-room. They had sat together talking on various matters for some ten minutes or more, when the Earl got up, walked to the door, and locked it. He next desired Johnson at once to settle some disputed account ; then, rising higher in his demands, ordered him, as he valued his life, to sign a paper which he had drawn up, and which was a confession of his (Johnson's) villainy. Johnson expostulated and refused, as an honest man would refuse, to sign his name to any such document. The Earl then drew from his pocket a loaded pistol, and bade him kneel down, for that his last hour was come. Johnson bent one knee, but the Earl insisted on his kneeling on both his knees. He did so, and Lord Ferrers at once fired. The ball entered his body below the rib, but it did not do its fell work instantaneously. Though mortally wounded, the poor fellow had strength

to rise, and to call loudly for assistance. The Earl at first coolly prepared as though he would discharge the other pistol, so as to put his victim out of misery; but, suddenly moved with remorse, he unlocked the door and called for the servants, who, on hearing the discharge of the pistol, had run in fear and trembling to the washhouse, not knowing whether his lordship would not take it into his head to send a bullet through their bodies also. He called them once and again, desired one to fetch a surgeon, and another to help the wounded man into a bed. It was clear, however, that Johnson had not many hours to live; and as he desired to see his children before he died, the Earl ordered that they should be summoned from the farm. Miss Johnson came speedily, and found her father apparently in the agonies of death, and Lord Ferrers standing by the bedside, and attempting to stanch the blood that flowed from the wound.

The whole neighbourhood was soon aroused, for the messenger who was sent for the doctor told the sad story to his friends and acquaintances along the road to Ashby, and by the time that the surgeon arrived there was a large crowd gathering round the house. His lordship now began to quake for his own life, and repeatedly implored the doctor not to allow him to be seized, declaring, at the same time, that he would shoot anyone who attempted to lay hands on him.

Fortunately, in order to deaden his feelings, his lordship had recourse to the porter-jugs, which he continued to drain one after another, till he was hopelessly drunk; and for a few minutes he threatened to renew the attack on poor Johnson, whom he reviled and cursed as a villain, vowing that he would shoot him through the head as he lay in the bed. Soon, however, the paroxysm passed away; and at the end of the day, while his victim was still writhing in agony, his lordship, stupefied with drink, lay down to sleep.

During the night, by a clever *ruse*, the surgeon, Mr. Kirkland, contrived to have Johnson removed to his home in a sort of sedan chair which he extemporised for the occasion; but he

survived the removal only a few hours, dying at nine o'clock the next morning.

The next part of the story shall be told in the words of the contemporary account as they stand in the 'Gentleman's Magazine.'

'As soon as it became known that Mr. Johnson was really dead, the neighbours set about seizing the murderer. A few persons, armed, set out for Staunton, and as they entered the hall-yard they saw the Earl going towards the stable, as they imagined, to take horse. He appeared to be just out of bed, his stockings being down and his garters in his hand, having probably taken the alarm immediately on coming out of his room and finding that Johnson had been removed. One Springthorpe, advancing towards his lordship, presented a pistol, and required him to surrender; but his lordship putting his hand to his pocket, Springthorpe imagined he was feeling for a pistol, and stopped short, being probably intimidated. He thus suffered the Earl to escape back into the house, where he fastened the doors, and stood on his defence. The crowd of people who had come to apprehend him beset the house, and their number increased very fast. In about two hours Lord Ferrers appeared at the garret window, and called out, "How is Johnson"? Springthorpe answered, "He is dead"; upon which his lordship insulted him, and called him a liar, and swore he would not believe anybody but the surgeon, Kirkland. Upon being again assured that he was dead, he desired that the people might be dispersed, saying that he would surrender; yet, almost in the same breath, he desired that the people might be let in, and have some victuals and drink: but the issue was that he went away again from the window, swearing that he would not be taken. The people, however, still continued near the house, and two hours later he was seen on the bowling-green by one Curtis, a collier. "My lord" was then armed with a blunderbuss and a dagger, and two or three pistols; but Curtis, so far from being intimidated . . . . . marched boldly up to him, and his lordship was so struck with

the determinate resolution shown by this brave fellow, that he suffered him to seize him without making any resistance. Yet the moment that he was in custody he declared that he had killed a villain, and that he gloried in the deed.'

The rest of the story is soon told. From Staunton, Lord Ferrers was taken to Ashby, where he was kept at an inn till the Monday following. During the interval, a coroner's jury sat upon the body, bringing in a verdict of 'wilful murder.' From Ashby, Lord Ferrers was sent to gaol at Leicester, and thence, about a fortnight later, to London. He was brought up, we are told, in his own landau and six, under a strong guard. He arrived in town about noon on the 14th of February, 'dressed like a jockey, in a close riding-frock, jockey boots and cap, and a plain shirt.'

Being arraigned before the House of Lords—for a peer has a legal right to be tried by his peers—and the coroner's verdict having been read aloud, he was formally committed into the custody of the Usher of the Black Rod, and ordered to be kept in the Tower. He arrived there about six in the evening, and we are gravely told that 'he behaved during the whole journey, and at his commitment, with great exactness and propriety'—whatever those words may mean. It may interest Mr. Hepworth Dixon, as the author of 'Her Majesty's Tower,' to learn, on good authority, that he was confined in the Round Tower near the drawbridge, two warders being constantly in the room with him, and one at the door; 'two sentinels also were posted on the stairs, and one upon the drawbridge, with their bayonets fixed; and from this time the gates were ordered to be shut an hour sooner than usual.' It is strange that so much of extra precaution should have been taken because a culprit about to be tried for his life happened to have worn an earl's coronet.

We are told by the chronicler of small things relating to this titled prisoner of State, how much beer, how much porter, how much water, Lord Ferrers was allowed daily during his incarceration. No doubt the writer 'interviewed'—or, at

least, tried to interview—the noble Earl in his dungeon. Mrs. C——, his lady-housekeeper, and her four young children were allowed to see him from time to time, and to correspond with him daily from a lodging which they had taken in the neighbourhood of the Minories.

On the 16th of April, when he had been a prisoner a little more than two months, he was brought to trial at the bar of the House of Peers. Lord Henley, afterwards Earl of Northington, who at that time happened to be Keeper of the Great Seal, presided as Lord High Steward, but with a want of dignity to which Horace Walpole more than once alludes in his letters to Sir Horace Mann and Mr. George Montague. The trial lasted till the 18th, when Lord Ferrers endeavoured with great skill and cleverness to elicit from several witnesses proofs of his insanity. No detailed report of the substance of such examination is extant ; but it may easily be believed that the greater the skill that he displayed, the more signal his failure.

'His lordship,' says one account, 'managed his defence in such a manner as to show perfect recollection of mind and uncommon powers of understanding ; he dwelt with the most delicate and affecting sensibility on the hard situation of being reduced to the necessity of proving himself a lunatic in order that he might not be deemed a murderer ; and when at last he found that his plea could avail him nothing, he confessed that he had put it forward only to gratify his friends, being always averse to it himself.'

It is needless to add that each of his brother peers, on being asked the usual question, brought in against Lord Ferrers a verdict of 'Guilty, upon my honour' ; accordingly he was sentenced by Lord Henley, in due form, to be 'hanged by the neck until he was dead,' his body being given afterwards, as was then the usual practice, to the anatomists for dissection. The day at first fixed for the execution was the 21st of April ; but we are told that, 'in consideration of his rank,' the fatal hour was postponed till the 5th of May. It

seems more to the point to record the fact that, also 'in consideration of his rank,' he was permitted to be hanged with a silken instead of a hempen rope.

At the trial, not only the Earl himself, but his two brothers, tried to prove him to have inherited the family misfortune of insanity; and, as Horace Walpole remarks, 'it must have been a strange contradiction to see a man trying, by his own sense, to prove himself out of his senses, and even more shocking to see his two brothers brought to prove the lunacy of their own blood, in order to save their brother's life. Both,' adds the old gossiper, 'are almost as ill-looking men as the Earl; one of them is a clergyman suspended by the Bishop of London for being a Methodist; the other a wild vagabond, whom they call in the country "ragged and dangerous."' As a proof of the madness of Lord Ferrers himself, it may be mentioned that two years before, in 1758, he had attempted to murder his wife, 'a pretty, harmless young woman,' according to Horace Walpole.

During the interval between his sentence and its execution, his lordship made a will bequeathing various sums to Mrs. C——, to his children by her, and to the children of his victim—a poor instalment of the reparation which he owed to the orphans for the murder of their parent.

The scaffold was erected at Tyburn turnpike, as nearly as possible on the spot where now stand Connaught Place and Connaught Square. About nine o'clock on the morning of the 5th, his lordship's person was formally demanded of the keeper of the Tower by the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex. Being informed of the fact, Lord Ferrers requested that he might be allowed to travel to Tyburn in his own landau, instead of in the mourning-coach which had been provided. His request was granted; and at the gate of the Tower he entered for the last time his own 'landau,' accompanied by one of the sheriffs and by the chaplain of the Tower, one Mr. Humphries.

The account of the journey from the Tower to Tyburn, as

it stands in the 'Gentleman's Magazine', is so strange that I venture to extract it entire :

'He was dressed in a suit of light-coloured clothes, embroidered with silver, said to have been his wedding-suit ; and soon after the Sheriff entered the landau he said, "You may perhaps, sir, think it strange to see me in this dress, but I have my particular reasons for it." The procession then began in the following order : A very large body of constables of the county of Middlesex, preceded by one of the high constables ; a party of horse grenadiers and a party of foot ; Mr. Sheriff Errington, in his chariot, accompanied by his under-sheriff, Mr. Jackson ; the landau, escorted by two other parties of horse grenadiers and foot ; Mr. Sheriff Vaillant's chariot, in which was the under-sheriff, Mr. Nichols ; a mourning-coach and six, with some of his lordship's friends ; and, lastly, a hearse and six, provided for the conveyance of his lordship's corpse from the place of execution to Surgeons' Hall.'

It is added that—

'The procession moved so slow that Lord Ferrers was two hours and three-quarters in his landau ; but during the whole time he appeared perfectly easy and composed, though he often expressed his desire to have it over, saying that the apparatus of death and the passing through such crowds of people was ten times worse than death itself. He told the Sheriff that he had written to the King, begging that he might suffer where his ancestor, the Earl of Essex, had suffered—namely, on Tower Hill ; that "he had been in the greater hope of obtaining this favour as he had the honour of quartering part of the same arms and of being allied to his Majesty ; and that he thought it hard that he should have to die at the place appointed for the execution of common felons." As to his crime, he declared that he did it "under particular circumstances, having met with so many crosses and vexations that he scarcely knew what he did" ; and, in fine, he protested that he had not the least malice towards Mr. Johnson.'

It would be profitless to dwell on all the lesser details of

Lord Ferrers' last journey—how he felt thirsty as he passed the top of Drury Lane, and wanted a glass of wine-and-water before he went on ; how he gave a sovereign to the assistant-executioner in mistake for his principal ; how he declared to the chaplain that he believed in a God, but did not like 'sectaries' and their teaching ; and how he expressed, at the last moment his forgiveness of the hangman and of all mankind.

It is enough to say, in the words of 'Sylvanus Urban,' whose contributor was doubtless an eye-witness of the scene, that his lordship met his fate with fortitude and composure of mind as he was pinioned and had the cap drawn over his eyes, and that as soon as the bolt was withdrawn the drop fell, and Lord Ferrers died quickly, and with but little apparent pain. At the end of an hour the body was put into a coffin, and taken to Surgeons' Hall, where the remainder of the sentence was carried out in all its disgusting details. The corpse, thus mutilated, was publicly exposed to view, and on the Thursday following was handed to his lordship's friends and family for interment ; but his remains were not destined to rest with those of his ancestors at Staunton Harold, for Mr. John Timbs tells us, in his 'Curiosities of London,' that after his execution, the body of Lord Ferrers was taken to old St. Pancras Church and there buried privately beneath the belfry, in a grave fourteen feet deep.

The Earl's widow also met with a tragic fate. She married, secondly, Lord F. Campbell, brother of John, fifth Duke of Argyll, and was burnt to death at Coombe Bank, Kent, in 1807, aged seventy years.

Horace Walpole calls Lord Ferrers 'a low wretch, a mad assassin, and a wild beast' ; and he details all the circumstances of his trial and execution, with considerable minuteness, to Sir Horace Mann, then our Ambassador at Florence. 'What,' he asks, 'will your Italians say to a peer of England, an earl of one of our best families, tried for murdering his servant with the utmost solemnity, and then hanged at the

common place for the execution of highwaymen, and afterwards anatomised ?'

I will only add that, as Lord Ferrers had no legitimate issue, the title and estate passed to his brother, and that therefore the present Earl Ferrers and the various collateral branches of the house of Shirley can at all events boast that they do not inherit one drop of the blood of Laurence, third Earl Ferrers.

THE DUCHESS OF KINGSTON

Among the ladies of 'quality' who made themselves most conspicuous and famous—I may almost say *famosæ* in the classical sense of the term—in the good old days when George III. was King, was Elizabeth Chudleigh, Countess of Bristol, and (or) Duchess of Kingston. A proud, haughty, and imperious child, she grew up headstrong and self-willed beyond her fellows, in an age when independence of character was far from uncommon among women ; and it is clear that she reigned for many years, feared, if not loved, among the circle of her compeers, long before her name was brought prominently before the world by certain events which I purpose recording in the present paper.

In the early part of the last century a certain Colonel and Mrs. Chudleigh were living at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, where the former, a cadet of a good family in Devonshire, and who had served in the army under Marlborough, held a subordinate post. Mr. and Mrs. Chudleigh had a family of several sons and daughters, the eldest of whom, Elizabeth, was, as Horace Walpole tells us, one of his playmates when he lived in his father's house at Chelsea.[1]

[1] Horace Walpole set her down as being fifty-five or fifty-six at the time of her trial, and he was likely to know the fact, as she and her brothers were his playfellows. The Walpoles then lived at Chelsea, and her father, Colonel Thomas Chudleigh (who died in 1726) was Deputy Governor of the College. Her mother was something of a heroine in her way; at all events, the story is told that, being asleep

Colonel Chudleigh died early, leaving it to his relict to educate and 'bring out' into society his young family on a very small income, exclusive of her pension as an officer's widow. Under these circumstances, Mrs. Chudleigh appears to have done what most other women would do in a like position, and resolved to turn to account her own and her husband's 'good connections'—the best substitute for money. She hired a house on the outskirts of the town, within reach of the rival camps of St. James's and Kensington Palaces; and, if she did not seek, at all events she soon found, an opportunity of displaying in high quarters the charms and attractions of her eldest daughter, Elizabeth, who was almost a woman at fifteen. From a child, it is said, she was distinguished for a brilliancy of wit and repartee,[1] and for other qualities which shone more brightly in fashionable circles than at home. It so happened that Frederick, Prince of Wales, and the Princess (the father and mother of George III.) held their Court at Leicester House, on the north side of what now is Leicester Square, having quitted St. James's in consequence of the continual quarrels between the Prince and his parents. Mr. Pulteney, afterwards Earl of Bath, was at this time a great favourite of the Prince and Princess. The Chudleighs knew something of Mr. Pulteney or of his wife; and Elizabeth, through their interest, was appointed, when only just eighteen, one of the Maids of Honour to the Princess. Mr. Pulteney took a somewhat more than paternal interest in the clever

one night as she was returning from a late party between London and Chelsea, she was awakened suddenly by three footpads, one of whom held a pistol to her breast. She coolly put her head out of the other window of her carriage, and said 'Fire!' when the patrol, who were fortunately at hand, fired, and shot the robber. The daughter, if we may judge from the coolness and nerve which she displayed on the memorable trial in Westminster Hall, was quite a 'chip of the old block,' and in no way degenerate.

[1] As an example of her wit, I may mention the following anecdote, which is told by Sir N. W. Wraxall. The Princess of Wales—who was accused of being far too intimate with Lord Bute—one day took Miss Chudleigh to task for some act of levity. '*Ah, Madame*,' was her quick retort,' '*chacune ici a son But*.'

girl, and encouraged her to improve her education, which had been somewhat neglected, and made her his amanuensis and constant correspondent. To him she would read aloud, and, although her volatile disposition prevented her from ever seriously applying herself to study, she gained sufficient superficial information to enable her to fulfil her own avowed aim of being on all subjects, whether she wrote or spoke, 'short, clear, and surprising.'

Had she lived in our days, she would probably have become a lady novelist; as it was, she played a *rôle* of her own choosing, acting out a romance instead of writing one. With such a pupil even so grave a statesman as Pulteney could laugh and amuse himself, for she had always plenty of small talk at hand; but it must be owned that when he tried to initiate her into the secrets of political economy and statesmanship, she rather demurred, and showed a decided preference for literature of a more amusing kind, and probably for lighter and more frivolous diversions. In her station, with a pretty face, fine figure, and much ready wit to recommend her, Miss Chudleigh soon became a general favourite with the Court at 'Leicester Fields,' among whom she could laugh and sing and play a part in the miniature theatre as well as any of the rest. A host of admirers sprung up around her, some with coronets in possession, others with titles in prospect.

Among those who were struck with her beauty and fascination was the Duke of Hamilton, who subsequently wedded one of the beautiful Miss Gunnings, after whom all the world ran mad, as already stated. The Duke proposed, and was accepted, and it seemed as if she were about to attain the summit of her ambition, the ducal strawberry-leaves, when the machinations of a heartless and meddlesome relative, Mrs. Hanmer, dashed the cup of happiness from her lips. Whatever may have been the motive of Mrs. Hanmer's dislike to the Hamiltons, it is certain that she set herself deliberately to work to break off the engagement of her niece, and to destroy her prospects, by intercepting the letters of the Duke during

his temporary absence in France. Like many another young lady's heart, that of Miss Chudleigh, if she had one, was caught on the rebound. It is probable that her ambition received a more severe blow than her affections in the supposed neglect of the Duke. She 'would be a duchess'; and a duchess in some sort at least, in England, though not in Scotland, she was destined to become, although the intrigues of her aunt prevented her from sharing the honours of his Grace of Hamilton.

Among the daily visitors of her aunt was a young naval officer, the Honourable Augustus Hervey, of whom Mrs. Hanmer was very fond, and on whom she had, for some inscrutable reason, fixed to become the husband of her niece. It was easy to throw the pretty, heedless girl into the young sailor's way, and to persuade the insulted beauty that the Duke's neglect proved he had ceased to care for her, at the same time contrasting his conduct with the devotion of her new admirer, and artfully suggesting that Hervey was in ultimate remainder to the earldom of Bristol. The bait took; her hopes of becoming a duchess being for the time frustrated, Elizabeth Chudleigh elected to run the chance of wearing a countess's coronet, although she cared nothing for the man who was to confer it on her.

Urged on the one side by the dictates of wounded pride and disappointed ambition, and on the other by the worldly arguments of an artful woman, Miss Chudleigh consented, in an evil hour, to become the wife of Captain Hervey; but as neither she nor her lover could afford the loss of her place at Court, it was settled that the marriage should be strictly private, and that even afterwards she should still officiate in her capacity as a 'maid of honour.'

In the neighbourhood of Winchester there is a small parish named Lainston, and here, in a private chapel adjoining the house of the squire, Mr. Merrill, was celebrated the union between Captain Hervey and Miss Chudleigh. It was performed late in the evening, by the light of a tallow candle

stuck into an empty bottle, and without much ceremony. The consequences of such a marriage, with no fixed principles of right and wrong on the part of either, could not well be otherwise than most disastrous. Captain Hervey seems, indeed, to have been utterly devoid of any qualities which could ensure the esteem or attachment of such a woman as Elizabeth Chudleigh, even for a time ; and her miseries, which date from this ill-starred union, proved the cause of all the future unhappiness which dogged her steps through life and gave a dismal colour to her fate. Only some forty-eight hours had elapsed from the scene in the little chapel when the bride and bridegroom parted ; and, as the union had not been publicly notified, they agreed that it should be kept secret. Elizabeth had already had sufficient knowledge of her husband's disposition to be aware it would require all the art of which she was mistress to insure his discretion should he change his mind and propose to make the marriage public. The best argument which she could plead was the fact that he had little or nothing to live on but his pay, and that if her marriage was publicly known she would lose her post as maid of honour. He therefore yielded the point, but in a way which showed that he was resolved to play the tyrant and to torture his victim. In fact, as she often expressed herself, 'her misery began with the arrival of Mr. Hervey in England, and the greatest joy that she experienced was the news of his departure.' Hence, while his ship was in the Downs or at Spithead, she always trembled with fear lest his destination might be altered by orders from the Lords of the Admiralty. 'A fair wind down the Channel' was the soother of her mind, and nothing pleased her better than to hear that his ship had been 'spoken' leagues away from England on the wide Atlantic.

Miss Chudleigh, or rather Mrs. Hervey, for such she was in the eye of the law—a maid in appearance, but really a wife in disguise—came back to London, and mixed as usual in the highest circles, with a cheerful face, but a heart heavy with the consciousness of her anomalous position and a forecast of

the misfortunes which awaited her. Her husband, though quieted for a time, made his presence in London offensively known, and even contrived to visit her at her lodgings in Maddox Street. Not many months afterwards Miss Chudleigh gave birth to a son, who, however, lived only a few short weeks. The same thing happened again a year or two later, and for some little time there was a boy who, if he had grown to manhood, would have 'put out of joint' the noses of the subsequent Earls and Marquises of Bristol. About this time, to add to the chagrin of the unhappy young wife, the Duke of Hamilton returned from France, and hastened to throw himself at the feet of his lady-love, and to inquire the reason of her mysterious silence. Mutual explanations ensued, and it appeared that, so far from his affection for Miss Chudleigh having cooled, he was more than ever desirous of making her his wife without delay. To his surprise, his suit was peremptorily rejected, and it being in fact equally impossible for the *ci-devant* Miss Chudleigh either to accept him or to explain her reasons for refusing the object of her former ambition, she was subjected to much inconvenient importunity from her mother, as well as from the Duke.

To escape the reproaches and resentment of the former, who, all this time was wholly ignorant of the fact of her daughter's marriage with Mr. Hervey, and of her having become a mother, she next embarked for the Continent, where, says Hone, in his 'Year Book,' she lived in a style of shameless dissipation. Calling herself Miss Chudleigh, she now so wrought upon Frederick the Great that he dispensed with all etiquette, in consequence of her request that 'she might study at her ease a prince who gave lessons to all Europe, and who might boast of having an admirer in every individual of the British nation.' During her residence at Berlin she was treated with the greatest distinction. She afterwards went to Dresden, where she obtained the friendship of the Electress, who loaded her with presents. Upon returning to England, she resumed her attendance upon the Princess of Wales, and

continued to be the attraction of the Court. Her marriage with Captain Hervey, however, perpetually annoyed her, and, to destroy all trace of it, she went with a party of friends to the parish where it had been celebrated, and, having asked for the register-book, tore out the record of her marriage while the clergyman was in conversation with the rest of the party.

Shortly afterwards, Captain Hervey becoming Earl of Bristol by the death of his father, and a rumour prevailing that he was in a declining state of health, Miss Chudleigh, now Countess of Bristol, hoping to be soon a wealthy dowager, obtained the restoration of the entry in the register. Fortune, however, was against her, and she found that by her precipitate act she had outwitted herself; as, to her great disappointment, the Earl, her husband, took it into his head to recover his health and strength, and she found herself once more a wife, and yet not a wife.

How far her marriage with Mr. Hervey had ever leaked out into the ears of 'society' is not very clear; but it is an axiom in the highest circles, I believe, that, as sin is not sin in the 'elect,' so '*vice is not vice in a duchess.*' And, therefore, even if the real state of the case was known to some of her friends, there was no one at hand to 'forbid the banns,' when, in March 1769, she publicly married Evelyn Pierrepont, Duke of Kingston, a not very wise old gentleman, who was somewhat of an invalid, and whose death might be expected, in the course of nature, at no distant date.

While the arrangements for this second alliance were pending, she made a variety of unavailing proposals to Lord Bristol to agree to a divorce, and even offered to facilitate it by some flagrant misconduct of her own before the eyes of all. But he refused. Luckily, however, the Earl found another lady who pleased him better, having plenty of cash at her banker's; and in the course of a few months a sentence of divorce was pronounced by the Ecclesiastical Courts at Doctors' Commons, and the marriage was solemnised as I have related.

Elizabeth Chudleigh was now at all events, if not a countess, at least an honest woman, and (which she valued still more highly) a duchess. She had gained the height of her ambition, and a giddy height she found it. She had but mounted

Unde altior esset
Casus et impulsæ præceps immane ruinæ.

The Duke very kindly and conveniently lived long enough to establish her fairly in the eyes of the world as his duchess, and then 'died, and slept with his fathers.' On opening his grace's will it was found that he had bequeathed to her his entire property, upon condition that she should never marry again ; and the Duchess plunged into a course of licentiousness which exposed her to public censure, and in consequence of which she went to Italy. A magnificent yacht, built and ornamented at an immense expense, conveyed her to Rome, where she was received with great pomp by the Pope and Cardinals, who knew but little of her antecedents, and was treated as a princess. During her residence in Rome she was on the eve of bestowing her hand and fortune upon an adventurer, who represented himself to be the Prince of Albania, when he was apprehended as a swindler, and committed suicide in prison. Soon afterwards, she learned that the heirs of the Duke of Kingston sought to establish against her the charge of bigamy, in order to invalidate her marriage with the Duke, and set aside his will. She instantly repaired to her banker, who, having been gained over by the other party, concealed himself, to avoid giving her the sum requisite for a journey to London. She placed herself at his door, and, pistol in hand, compelled him to comply with her demand. Upon her arrival in England she found that her first marriage had been declared valid, upon the ground of incompetency in the court which had pronounced it void. Public opinion was against her ; and, under the character of Lady Kitty Crocodile, she was ridiculed by Foote in a comedy entitled 'A Trip to Calais,' of which,

however, she succeeded in obtaining the prohibition from the Lord Chamberlain.

The validity of her first marriage with Mr. Hervey at Lainston having been established by witnesses who were present, to the satisfaction of those of the Duke's relatives who had an interest in setting aside his will, it was resolved that she should be publicly indicted for bigamy, and that her trial should be really a State trial, being held in Westminster Hall, the House of Peers sitting as her judges.

Finding it necessary to return to England, as already stated, in order to meet the charges which were being made publicly against her, the Duchess embarked for Dover, and, reaching London, drove straight to her house at Knightsbridge, where she found plenty of friends ready to espouse her cause —amongst others the Earl of Mansfield and the Duke of Newcastle. Anxious, apparently, to turn to the best account the weary weeks which must intervene before the day of the trial, and to advertise herself, and to rouse, if possible, the men in her cause, even if she scandalised the fairer portion of creation, she resolved to put in her appearance once more in some place of public resort, and accordingly the next night she attended a masked ball at the residence of Mrs. Cornelys, at Carlisle House, Soho Square.

She appeared on this occasion as 'Iphigenia.' There is a print which represents her in this character, very scantily dressed for a priestess, it must be owned, and which fully justifies the sarcastic terms in which Horace Walpole alludes to it.

Meanwhile the attention of the world was concentrated on the expected trial, to which Horace Walpole often alludes in a vein of banter which shows that he considered the Duchess no better than she ought to be. He writes to his friend Sir Horace Mann, in Italy, March 22, in that year : 'Everybody is on the quest for tickets for her Grace of Kingston's trial. I am persuaded that her impudence will operate in some singular manner ; probably she will appear in weeds, with a

train to reach across Westminster Hall, with mourning maids of honour to support her when she swoons at her dear Duke's name, and in a black veil to conceal her blushing—or not blushing. To this farce, novel and curious as it will be, I shall not go. I think cripples have no business in crowds but at the Pool of Bethesda ; and to be sure this is no angel that troubles the waters.'

The trial was a matter which, for weeks before it came on, absorbed the public attention to an extent which has never since been equalled, except by the trial of the impostor Orton, who wanted to palm himself off as a genuine Tichborne. It was attended by Queen Charlotte, the Prince of Wales, by most of the members of the Royal Family, the foreign ambassadors, members of Parliament, and other distinguished personages. The Duchess, in deep mourning, took her seat unmoved, attended by two *femmes de chambre*, a physician, an apothecary, her secretary, and a formidable army of defenders in the shape of six barristers in wig and gown. I have before me a picture of the Duchess standing at the bar and pleading her own cause ; and if, as I have reason to think, it is a sketch from life, there can be no doubt that she was a woman well able to hold her own, even before the most august assembly in England.

As usual, it is from the chatty pages of Horace Walpole that we learn nearly all that is known of the way in which 'society' at the time regarded the trial of her Grace the Duchess of Kingston. He did not go actually to see it or hear it, for he 'hated crowds,' and viewed the chief actor or actress with no favourable eye ; but he describes the scene in Westminster Hall almost as vividly as if he had been present, in this letter to Sir Horace Mann, April 17, 1776 :

'We think and talk but of one subject—the solemn comedy that is acting in Westminster Hall. Deep wagers had been laid that the Duchess would decamp before the trial came on. This, with a million of other stories, has been so spread that I am determined to believe no one fact but what I shall read in

the printed trial ; for at it I have not been, though curious enough about so august a mummery and so original a culprit. . . . The scene opened on Wednesday with all its pomp . . . and the doubly noble prisoner went through her part with universal admiration. Instead of her usual ostentatious folly and clumsy pretensions to cunning, all her conduct was decent, and even seemed natural. Her dress was entirely black and plain ; her attendants not too numerous ; her dismay at first perfectly unaffected. A few tears balanced cheerfulness enough, and her presence of mind and attention never deserted her. This rational behaviour and the pleadings of her four counsel, who contended for the finality of her Ecclesiastical Court's sentence against a second trial, carried her triumphantly through the first day, and turned the stream much in her favour.'

The next day she was less successful, and, in consequence, 'had to be blooded as soon as she retired, and fell into a great passion of tears.' And probably Horace Walpole, at this time, was not singular in thinking that the Ecclesiastical Courts were quite as much on their trial as was her Grace. He adds that Lord Bristol in his opinion did not stand in a fair predicament, for he had never avowed his marriage with Miss Chudleigh, and was supposed to have connived, for a sum of money, at her marrying the Duke.

Ever alive to the last floating rumours and the gossip of the day, Horace writes to the Rev. W. Mason, under date April 20, 1776 : 'The plot thickens, or rather opens. Yesterday the judges were called on for their opinions, and *unâ voce* dismantled the Ecclesiastical Court. . . The Attorney-General, Thurlow, then detailed the "Life and Adventures of Elizabeth Chudleigh, *alias* Hervey, *alias* the most high and puissante princess the Duchess of Kingston." Her Grace bore the narration with a front worthy of her exalted rank. Then was produced the first capital witness, the ancient damsel who was present at her first marriage. . . . To this witness her Grace was benign, but had a transitory swoon at the mention of her

dear Duke's name ; and at intervals has been blooded enough to have supplied her execution, if necessary. Two babes were likewise proved to have blessed her first nuptials, one of whom, for aught that appears, may exist and become Earl of Bristol.'

The register of Chelsea Old Church has certainly the following entry, Nov. 2, 1747 : 'Augustus Hervey, son of the Hon. Augustus Hervey, baptized by the Hon. and Rev. Henry Aston' ; and the discovery of this entry, as Lysons observed, might have spared many interrogatories at the Duchess of Kingston's trial.

The trial lasted through several days ; on Friday, the 19th, and Saturday, the 20th, the case of the Duchess did not gain ground at all, but rather the reverse. So much so, indeed, was this the case, that one of her friends remarked that she must have been mad 'to have sought the trial, or not to have poisoned the witnesses.' For instance, there appeared a maid who was present at her first marriage. Serjeant Hawkins authenticated the birth of at least one child ; and the widow of the parson who officiated at her first marriage, and on whom she forced a fictitious register when she expected Lord Bristol's death and had a mind to be a countess, deposed that, though privy to all these circumstances, on visiting her as duchess the latter said to her, 'Well, Mrs. Phillips, was not the Duke very good to marry an old maid like me?'

And what, the reader will ask, was the end of this memorable trial? Elizabeth Chudleigh was found by the House of Peers guilty of bigamy, but, 'pleading her privilege' as a peer's wife, she was discharged without any punishment.

On the 23rd of April Walpole writes to his friend Mason : 'The wisdom of the land has been exerted for five days in turning a duchess into a countess, and yet does not think it a punishable crime for a countess to convert herself into a duchess. After a paltry defence, and a speech of fifty pages (which she had herself written, and pronounced very well), the sages, in spite of the Attorney-General (who brandished a hot iron), dismissed her with the single injunction of paying the fees, all

voting her guilty ; but the Duke of Newcastle—her neighbour in the country—softening his vote by adding "erroneously, not intentionally." So ends the solemn farce. The Earl of Bristol, they say,' adds Walpole, 'does not intend to leave her that title, nor the house of Medows a shilling. . . . I am glad to have done with her.'

Hannah More, who was present among the crowd, tells us that she was dressed in deep mourning, but that hardly a trace of her once enchanting beauty was visible, and that if it had not been for her white face, she might easily have been taken for a bale of bombasin. She adds that she behaved herself properly, and even with dignity, and that her presence of mind did not desert her for a single moment.

Undeterred by a threat of a writ *ne exeat regno* being issued against her, as soon as the trial was over the duchess-countess was off to Calais, and on her way to Paris. She writes from Calais on the 26th to a friend, sarcastically remarking that the peers have recognised her as Countess of Bristol, the Ecclesiastical Courts as duchess, but that she still adhered to her own position, and proudly signed her name to the letter 'Elizabeth, Duchesse de Kingston.' She retired to Paris 'incontinently,' as the phrase then ran ; and the writ *ne exeat regno* was issued just after the bird was flown. Probably her enemies took good care not to drive her too closely into a corner, and felt that it was better for the peace of London and of 'society' that she should be on the other side of the Channel. 'Don't let us talk of her any more,' writes Horace Walpole ; he adds in the same breath, 'Yes, I must say a word more. I will tell you what the droll Lord Abercorn said. Somebody "hoped that his lordship had not suffered by the trial." He replied, "Oh no ; nobody suffered by it." And, indeed, though not a comedy, it was a farce.'

The subsequent career of the ex-duchess was in keeping with her preceding adventures. I have already mentioned that she was too sharp for the writ *ne exeat regno*, and before it could be issued she had bolted from Knightsbridge, and turned

up at Calais, though there were no railways or steamers to aid her flight. From Calais she made her way to Rome, where she contrived to propitiate the favour of the Pope so far as to be received by him and fêted *en princesse*—a good turn which she requited by a handsome bequest of jewellery in her will.

After remaining there for some time she returned to Calais, and hired a spacious mansion, which she furnished splendidly; but the monotony of the town not suiting her volatile and turbulent disposition, she made a voyage to St. Petersburg in a magnificent yacht, and was received with the highest distinction by the Empress Catherine, to whom she presented the valuable collection of pictures formed by the Kingston family. She afterwards went to Poland, where Prince Radzivill gave sumptuous entertainments in honour of her visit, particularly a bear-hunt by torchlight. Upon returning to France, she purchased the beautiful château de Sainte Assize, two leagues from Fontainebleau, and a mansion in the Rue Coq-Héron at Paris, where she died in 1788, after executing a will made by two attorneys who came from England on purpose. She bequeathed a set of jewels to the Empress of Russia, a large diamond to the Pope, and a costly pearl necklace and earrings to the Countess of Salisbury, because they had belonged to a lady who bore that title in the reign of Henry IV. Her property in France was estimated at 200,000*l.* sterling, besides which she had valuable possessions in England and Russia.

The Duchess of Kingston, during her second *noces* and in her second widowhood, lived at Kingston House, Knightsbridge, afterwards known as Listowel House, and at one time the residence of the Marquis Wellesley. In allusion to her connection with this spot, she is spoken of in a play of the last century as 'the notified Bet Cheatley, Duchess of Knightsbridge.' Peter Cunningham, in his 'Handbook of London,' briefly and tersely disposes of her as 'the profligate and eccentric duchess.' Leigh Hunt, in his 'Old Court Suburb,' styles her 'an adventuress, who, after playing tricks with a parish register for the purpose of alternately falsifying and substan-

tiating a real marriage, according as the prospects of her husband varied, imposed herself upon a duke for a spinster, and survived him as a duchess until unmasked in a court of law.' He adds his opinion that she was 'a well-born and handsome, but coarse-minded woman, qualified to impose on none but very young or very shallow admirers. Her first husband, who became Earl of Bristol, was at the time of his marriage with her a young seaman just out of his teens ; and the Duke, her second husband, though he was the nephew of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, appears never to have outgrown the teens of his understanding.' He thus wittily and pithily expresses his opinion about her : 'Hating prolixity and mock modesty, her maxim . . . . was to be "short, clear, and surprising"; so she concentrated her rhetoric into swearing, and dressed in a style next door to nakedness. The wealth, however, which was bequeathed to her by the Duke enabled her, in spite of the loss of his title in England, to go and flare as a duchess abroad, where her jewels procured for her the friendship of sovereigns, and the Pope himself figured in her will.'

For my own part, I venture to think that she may have had, and probably had, *au fond* a good and noble disposition, accompanied, however, with a high and proud spirit and strong passions. The cruel deceit practised on her when young by her aunt, coupled with her intense ambition, her waywardness, and her pride, perverted the better part of her nature, and drove her into courses from which in the innocence of childhood and youth she would have shrunk back with horror.

There is a sense of awful responsibility in the reflection that we all exercise an influence, more or less, for good or evil on those around us ; and for those who misuse it to warp the ductile minds of the young in order to carry out their own selfish purposes, a fearful day of reckoning will surely come, when they will plead in vain, 'Am I my brother's keeper'? Such, at least, is the moral that I would have my readers draw from the story of Elizabeth Chudleigh.

Mr. Addison, in his 'Anecdotes,' tells an amusing story of the Duchess, showing that she was proud and haughty, and had far too high a sense of her dignity. Being one day detained in her carriage by a cart of coals that was unloading in a very narrow street, she leaned out with both her arms upon the door, and asked the fellow, 'How dare you, sirrah, to stop a woman of quality in the street?' 'Woman of quality!' replied the man. 'Yes, fellow,' rejoined her Grace; 'don't you see *my arms upon my carriage?*' 'Yes, I do indeed,' he answered, 'and a pair of d—d coarse arms they are.'

THE DRUMMONDS, EARLS OF PERTH.

Few names, even in Scottish history, stand forth more nobly and proudly than that of Drummond. According to Sir Bernard Burke and the heralds, the house of Drummond derives its descent from a Hungarian in the suite of Edgar Atheling, the contemporary, and in some sense rival, of William the Conqueror; but the importance of the family dates really from the reign of Robert III. of Scotland, who took for his consort Lady Annabella, a fair daughter of Drummond of Stobhall. From that period they became closely connected with the Court and the Crown of Scotland, and attained the honours of the peerage of that country over four hundred years ago, in A.D. 1487, when the head of the house, Sir John Drummond, of Cargill and Stobhall, a distinguished statesman and diplomatist of his day, and Ambassador Extraordinary to the Court of St. James, was created Lord Drummond: his great-great-grandson James, fourth Lord, being Ambassador for King James VI. to Spain, was created in 1605, Earl of Perth, with remainder to his 'heirs male whomsoever.'

The story of the origin of the name of Drummond is thus related in the older Peerages: 'Maurice, son of George, son of Andrew, King of Hungary, being in command of the vessel in which Saint Margaret, afterwards Queen of Malcolm III.,

embarked for Hungary, happened to be driven by a storm into the Firth of Forth. Here, on landing, fortune befriended him, for he was made Steward of Lennox, and received from the hands of King Malcolm the lands of Drymen, or Drummen, from which was derived the name of Drummond. And to this day, in memory of his safe pilotage of Queen Margaret, his descendants bear for their arms "three bars wavy, gules," representing the waves of the sea.'

His descendant in the fifth generation, Sir John Drummond of Drummond, and Steward or Thane of Lennox, was a brave defender of the liberties of Scotland at the commencement of King Edward's usurpation; and his son, Sir Malcolm, immediately after the Battle of Bannockburn, obtained from Robert I. a grant of broad lands in Perthshire, in reward of his services in that battle, in which, by his advice, caltrops were first used as a defence against the English horse. In memory of this sage counsel, 'his descendants,' as Burke tells us, 'bear caltrops upon a compartment with their arms, along with the motto, "Gang warily."'

His grandson, Sir John Drummond, marrying a lady named De Montifex, heiress of Stobhall and other extensive estates in Perthshire, became by her the father of a daughter, the Lady Annabella, a lady of great beauty and merit, whom I have already mentioned as the wife of King Robert III. She was crowned with him, as Queen Consort of Scotland, in September 1390; and it is worthy of note that her blood runs in the veins not merely of Queen Victoria, but of many other crowned heads of Europe in this our nineteenth century.

It is not my purpose here to give an exact account of all the achievements of all the Lords of Drummond and Earls of Perth. It is enough to say that, in the words of one of the members of that House, Lady Clementina Davies, in her 'Recollections of Society,' they 'first suffered exile and losses in common with the Stuarts, whom they regarded as their only true sovereigns; and then, after a hundred years of exile at St. Germain, they shared the fall and misfortunes of the

House of Bourbon, to which they had been scarcely less loyally attached.'

This claim, advanced by Lady C. Davies, is supported by the independent testimony of Burke, who observes: 'Their loyalty (*i.e.* that of the Drummonds) to the throne shone at all times conspicuous; but the crisis which called out their whole energies and devotion was the great contest which preceded the final overthow of the ancient dynasty of Scotland, that of the Stuarts. So long as the conflict was waged on the battle-field, the Drummonds fought manfully in the cause which they had espoused, and, at length, when the last ruin of the hapless cause of Stuart was consummated at Culloden, they left their native land, to die banished and broken-hearted in a foreign clime. They had fearlessly set their all upon the cast of the die, and they cheerfully submitted to its hazard.'

And such really was the case; James, the fourth Earl of Perth, on the defeat and abdication of King James II., accompanied his sovereign into exile at St. Germain. He was Lord Chancellor of Scotland, and a man of high standing in the world of politics as well as of law; he was also connected with the noblest of the Scottish houses, his three wives having been respectively the daughter of the Marquis of Douglas, the widow of the Earl of Tullibardine, and the daughter of the Marquis of Huntly, head of the ducal house of Gordon. His fidelity to the Stuarts was not unrewarded, as he was raised by James, in 1695, to the Dukedom of Perth, a title which was confirmed in France by Louis XIV. on the death of James, along with the other Dukedoms of Berwick, Fitzjames, Albemarle, and Melfort. He died just before the Scottish rising of 1715.

But I must pass on to another part of the story of the Drummonds, that of the second Duke of Perth and of his gallant duchess. History tells us how James, fifth Earl and second Duke of Perth, fought by the side of King James at the Battle of the Boyne, at Limerick, and at Londonderry, and, remaining with him till all his hopes were defeated, returned

to Scotland in 1692. While his father lay a prisoner in Stirling Castle, he crossed over to France, and was made Master of the Horse to Mary of Modena, James's queen. Next, returning to Scotland, we find him opposing the Union with all his might; and, in 1715, he joined the standard of rebellion raised by the Earl of Mar and his Highland chieftains, and commanded the cavalry at the Battle of Sheriffmuir. His wife was Lady Jean Gordon, a daughter of the Duke of Gordon, whose story I here relate.

Both by family descent—her father and her mother being strict Roman Catholics—and also in virtue of her marriage, her Grace had imbibed a spirit of entire devotion to the Stuart cause. She is described, in a contemporary pamphlet, now very scarce, as having a 'tolerable share of beauty, and a majestic person'—qualities which certainly are more than borne out by the original portrait of her Grace, painted by Van Vost in 1711, and still to be seen at Drummond Castle. She has a magnificent high forehead, and prominent nose and chin; a mouth expressive of the most firm resolution; and brown eyes, a shade or two darker than her hair. As we look on that face, we can easily believe that her temper was 'rather imperious than soft,' and that she was as 'passionate' as 'obstinate.' We are told that even as a child she showed some traces of ferocity and cruelty; but, adds the writer (who, however, is prejudiced against her as a 'female rebel'), 'since she commenced to play the warrior, she has given a full swing to the natural fierceness of her disposition, and in many cases has laid aside not only the woman, but even humanity.'

It appears that when the Chevalier first landed in the Highlands, the Duke of Perth, though wishing well to his cause, was scarcely willing to risk a rising in his favour; but his duchess, like a true woman, was no such half-hearted partisan. His Grace's disposition caused her great uneasiness: 'she sweetened, cajoled, threatened, and caressed him by turns; sometimes she was all mildness, and would attempt to reason

him into her measures ; at other times she was all fire and flint, and would needs force him into her terms. And when the Duke would reply, as he did sometimes, that he would gladly make an effort if he saw a chance of success, she called him a "poor pusillanimous wretch," and taunted him in bitter terms with the meanness of waiting to see what other chiefs would join the Chevalier's standard. "You wait," she cried, "till some great man joins him ; another, till a third joins ; and he till you both join. The consequence will be that you will be so long in debating as to whether it is safe to join or not, that you will lose the opportunity for ever. . . . For God's sake ! if you deserve to be Duke of Perth, exert yourself suitably to your rank, and show by your actions that you deserve the title you bear by daring to fight for it." '

In this way her Grace continued to urge the duke till Charles Edward was within a few miles of Castle Drummond ; and when her husband would have gladly absented himself and washed his hands of the affair, she vowed that she would shut the gates against him and give him up as a prisoner to the Prince, if he would not stir himself. Accordingly, he thought it best to obey his spouse, and to wait on Charles Edward. So 'he and she went in their coach and six, and met him about seven miles from Castle Drummond, where he lay that night.' We can easily imagine with what zeal and politeness she exerted herself to entertain her royal guest, while the Duke sat by in a melancholy 'brown study.' Indeed, so successfully did she ply her woman's weapons of banter, jest, and taunt, that before the Prince left the house the Duke had plucked up a spirit, and entered heart and soul into that brave but mad enterprise which was to strip him of his princely possessions, and send him forth an exile and a wanderer, like the Prince whose failing cause he espoused.

Next day the Duke contented himself with escorting the Prince as far as Perth, and with issuing a proclamation calling on his retainers to appear under the banner of the House of Castle Drummond within six days. But her Grace was a

much more active partisan. She was out on horseback for three days and three nights, during which she never slept, and then returned to the castle at the head of seven hundred and fifty men. As the Duke had not come back, she set up the family standard with her own hand, proclaimed the Prince by the sound of bagpipes and hunting-horns, which she was obliged to use for want of trumpets, laid open her cellars to the multitude, and, mounting on horseback, rode at the head of her troops to meet the Duke. The latter, who had no idea of seeing so many men under arms, was at first afraid, and thought that he was about to be seized and arrested ; but the Duchess assured him there was no ground for alarm, and that the men at her back were her own levy. 'The change of fancied enemies into real friends,' says the pamphlet, 'was very agreeable to the Duke and his party, who, it is said, showed very little stomach to fight, and, if the joke had been carried any further, would in all probability have showed her Grace a pair of heels. This advantage afforded table talk to the Young Pretender's Court for a considerable time ; and the banter was carried so far against the Duke that he was much annoyed at it, and the Pretender was obliged to put a stop to it by his authority.'

Accompanying her husband and the Prince to Edinburgh, the Duchess added much to the brilliancy of his Court at Holyrood. All sorts of anecdotes are told of her wit, her presence of mind, and readiness of resource. For instance, just before the battle of Prestonpans, when her husband came to take leave of her in a desponding mood, she quietly said, 'Well, you are going to the battle, and I to cards : both are in the hands of chance, and I shall be quite happy if you come back victorious, though with the loss of a leg or an arm ; but I really care little whether you die on the field of honour or in my arms on a bed : but I would rather be the widow of a man who had died nobly in a righteous cause, than the wife of the greatest duke or prince on earth.'

After the battle, she urged the Duke to follow up the

success which he had thus far gained, and to push on while the enemy was panic-struck, before the King's troops could be brought together. But she seems to have been as cruel as she was audacious ; for she urged her husband to put to the sword the prisoners that were taken, and to carry a Border castle by assault, or starve its holders into submission. And when she could not gain her point, it is recorded that she took a barbarous pleasure in insulting the prisoners whom she had in hand, and even blamed the Prince for treating them with common humanity.

When the Highland army crossed into England, the Duchess would not be left behind, but, attended by only a lady friend, Mrs. Murray, and a single maid, she resolved to join in the campaign, though it was winter. In the March of that year she was up and on horseback with the daybreak ; and when Carlisle surrendered, she strongly urged the policy of hanging all the townsmen because they did not open their gates at her first summons, holding that it was a good thing to strike terror at once. Here, as is well known, both the Prince and her husband, not seeing much prospect of being able to carry the war by a *coup de main*, were inclined to turn back into Scotland ; but her Grace set aside the idea by vowing that if her husband would not head the Drummonds, she would head them herself, and fight till not one remained ; adding, with true female spite, that if he wished so much to save his pitiful carcass, she would try to do his part in the field, and he would not be much missed in the cabinet !

On the return of the army northwards, we are told that the citizens of Glasgow were made by her to feel the full weight of her resentment, and that it was through her that the levies and supplies enforced upon that city were so exorbitant as almost to cause an outbreak. From this place, however, she found it necessary to return with the Duke and a detachment to Drummond Castle, and there she remained till the rest of the defeated Highlanders rejoined them. Here it would seem that, fairly brought to bay, and irritated to mad-

ness at the failure of her enterprise, she gave loose reins to her innate cruelty, not only taking a barbarous pleasure in seeing the common prisoners tortured, and insulting the officers, but showing herself a terror and scourge even to her own people. She was, we are told, so strict a disciplinarian that she would forgive no fault, however trifling, or neglect of her wishes even in trifles.

At Culloden her Grace was in the rear of the army, and it was with difficulty that she was prevented from appearing in the front. When the troops began to show some signs of rout, she saw a certain lord making away at full speed. As he passed her Grace, she cried out, 'My lord, you mistake your way : the enemies are behind, and you will not meet them in that direction !' In the retreat she helped to cover the hindmost of the fugitives, and wheeled round several times against the light horse that were in close pursuit. She kept with the fugitives as far as Inverness, where, worn out with vexation and disappointment far more than by actual fatigue, she was forced to rest for an hour, and there was arrested the same day, partly by force and partly by treachery, together with some other ladies of less note.

Long after her husband's death the Duchess continued, though passively, to maintain the Stuart cause in the North ; and it is recorded of her that she had the greater part of the walls of Drummond Castle demolished and levelled to their foundations, in order to prevent it from being seized and garrisoned by the Royal troops. She remained there—so says the family tradition—until she saw the work of destruction completed, when she retired to Stobhall, in Perthshire, and there she ended her troubled days in peace at the age of about ninety years.

A fatality seems to have constantly followed the holders of the ducal title. The Duke died at Paris in 1720, leaving two sons, James and John, both of whom, exiles in a foreign land, in turn assumed the coronet of barren strawberry-leaves, though under attainder, while their noble estates were con-

fiscated by the Crown, and given to the Drummonds of Lundin, a younger branch.

After John, the fourth duke, came two other dukes, his uncles; but they speedily followed each other to the tomb at St. Germain, issueless, and apparently unmarried. And in the year 1760 perished the last male descendant of the loyal Scottish Chancellor, the earldom being dormant, or presumed to have become extinct through the operation of the attainder forty-five years previously.

A distant cousin, James Drummond, of Lundin, bent upon reviving, if possible, the lost but untarnished shield of the family, got himself 'served' at Edinburgh in 1765 'heir male' of the exiled lords, and in consequence was recognised as head and representative of the house of Drummond. He was styled by his friends tenth Earl of Perth, and such, no doubt, he was *de jure*, though the earldom was under the eclipse of the attainder. His son and successor, James, eleventh earl *de jure*, obtained in 1785 the restoration of the Drummond estates by the Court of Session and Act of Parliament, as being 'the nearest collateral heir male of Lord John Drummond, in whom the lands had become forfeited in 1746.' His Scottish earldom, however, was never recognised by the Crown or Parliament, nor did he ever attempt to record his vote at elections for Scottish representative peers. But in 1797 he was created a peer of Great Britain as Baron of Perth; he died, however, soon after, without leaving a son; and the magnificent estates of the ancient Earls of Perth, including Drummond Castle, passed by inheritance to his only daughter and heir, who carried them in marriage to Lord Willoughby de Eresby.

The representation, however, of the dormant earldom of Perth, apart from the possession of its *estates*, reverted to the nearest *heir male*, James Lewis, fourth Duke of Melfort in France, as great-grandson of John Drummond, Earl and Duke of Melfort. He died, however, a few months subsequently, when his brother, Charles Edward Drummond, became fifth Duke of Melfort in France, and *de jure* thirteenth Earl of

Perth in Scotland. Being a Catholic prelate, however, he was never able to effect the restoration of his dormant Scottish honours, or even to bring his case before the House of Lords. On his death at Rome, in 1840, the headship of the family devolved on his nephew, George Drummond, who was born in London in 1807, and for some years held a captaincy in the 93rd Highlanders. In 1853, his petition to that effect having been duly presented and considered, he was restored by the special command and recommendation of her Majesty and by an Act of Parliament passed without a dissentient voice ; and accordingly he is now fourteenth Earl of Perth in the peerage of Scotland, and sixth Duke of Melfort in France.

This dukedom is not a sham one, like that of the apocryphal and *soi-disant* 'Duc de Roussillon,' but a real and substantial title, regularly bestowed and regularly transmitted from its first grantee, John Drummond, a grandson of the third Earl of Perth. Like his kinsman, Lord Perth followed King James to St. Germain, where on April 17, 1692, he was raised to the dukedom by his sovereign, and the title was confirmed to him in France by *Le Grand Monarque.* He was, however, attainted in Scotland by the Parliament of that kingdom in 1695, expressly for having been seen at St. Germain.

Thus, for some six or seven generations have the ancient and loyal Drummonds been obliged to live as exiles from their native land, admitted to the Courts of the Tuileries and Versailles, but banished from that of St. James. Thus, under the stupid and senseless penal laws of the last century have Scottish energy, capacity, and integrity been added to the capital of France, and deducted from that of Great Britain, the loss of this country being precisely the gain of our neighbours. When the Drummonds fled into exile in 1688, *Le Grand Monarque* was graciously pleased to reward them not only with titles, but with a residence in the Royal Château at St. Germain, where they lived without intermission for a century or more ; and I believe that I am not exceeding the liberty which has been allowed me when I add that Lady

Clementina Davies, to whom I owe some of the intelligence contained in these pages, was the very last person born within the Château of St. Germain in October 1795, just before the necessities of the first French Revolution drove back the Drummonds to the shores which they had left for exile and comparative poverty in the cause of loyalty. *Aymez loyaulté* is the motto of the Paulets, Marquises of Winchester; but there is no need to write those words on the banners of the Drummonds, for they are already engraven upon their hearts. If not, they never will be now.

THE THREE MISS WALPOLES

My readers, no doubt, will all remember the Miss Gunnings,[1] the Court beauties about whom the whole fashionable world—indeed, I may say all the island from the Land's End to John o' Groat's House—ran mad some century and a quarter ago, and one of whom a contemporary writer styles the 'double duchessed,' in allusion to her having married two dukes in succession. Their story is somewhat strange in its way, but it is equalled, if not surpassed, in romance by the tale of the births, marriages, and ultimate fortunes of three beautiful Miss Walpoles, the daughters of Horace Walpole's brother Edward by a certain 'left-handed' union, the details of which are to be seen in the 'Memoirs of Horace Walpole and his Contemporaries,' edited in 1845 by Eliot Warburton.

Sir Robert Walpole, who was for so many years Prime Minister under Kings George I. and II., and who was created Earl of Orford on retiring from ministerial life, left three sons. The eldest was Robert, who succeeded as second earl; the youngest was Horace, the wit and antiquary of Strawberry Hill; and between them in the family tree stood the great statesman's second son Edward (some time a member of Parliament and Chief Secretary for Ireland), who, though he

[1] See above, p. 12.

never himself wore a peer's coronet, became eventually the grandfather of one royal duke and of one royal princess, and the great-grandfather of at least one duke and one marquis in the peerage of Great Britain.

Good looks were a heritage in the Walpole family. We are told that when the great Sir Robert Walpole was a young man about town he was one of the handomest of a very handsome set, and a full share of his good looks appears to have passed to his son Edward, who was born in or about 1710. When he was only eighteen his appearance was so much in his favour that the ladies in Italy and Paris with one consent gave him the name of 'the handsome Englishman.' Having completed his education by going what was known as the 'Grand Tour,' without which no man of 'quality' could be regarded as fit for society, he resolved to settle down in London, leading an easy, self-indulgent life as a bachelor, lodging at the West End, and belonging to half a dozen clubs where high play and Whig politics prevailed. In the year 1730 he occupied first-floor apartments over the shop of a certain tailor, in Pall Mall, named Rennie, who, we are told, made children's coats. As he passed daily by the door, in order to get to his apartments, his notice was frequently attracted by one of the youthful apprentices—a fair girl with blue eyes and bright Saxon complexion—who worked in the shop, cutting out patterns and sewing small clothes. Her name was Mary Clement. Her family, though respectable, were too reduced in circumstances to give her any better education than such as she could pick up in Mr. Rennie's establishment ; but, though poor, they were anxious that she should maintain a good reputation. Mr. Edward Walpole somehow or other contrived to have frequent interviews with her when Rennie's back was turned, and to give her many little presents ; but not so secretly as to escape the more penetrating eye of Madame Rennie, who rated her soundly, and even sent for her father, in order to take her into the country out of the way of temptation. No doubt she lectured her pretty sharply

on the great impropriety of her receiving presents and other attentions from so 'fine' a gentleman as their lodger on the first floor, and tried hard to convince her how much more it would be to the advantage of 'such a girl as plain Mary Clement to become the wife of a respectable tradesman in her own rank of life, rather than carry on a flirtation with one so much above her as Mr. Edward Walpole.' Somehow or other, however, Mary Clement failed to see the matter from her mistress's point of view, though she appeared to be ready to listen to her disinterested advice, and even began to make ready for her departure. Indeed, it is said by one fussy chronicler of minute details that she 'went upstairs and began to pack up her boxes,' as apprentices and servant-girls usually do in such cases.

Be this, however, as it may, one thing is certain, namely, that the next morning, when Mr. Rennie opened his shop, there was no Mary Clement to be seen or found; and that as the day wore on she never returned to her needle. It appears that immediately on leaving Mrs. Rennie's presence she had rushed upstairs to the apartments of the 'handsome Englishman; when'—to use the words of the biographer of the Walpoles—'he received her with open arms; she vowed that she would never leave him; and she kept her word.' It is to be hoped, however, that Mr. Walpole, when he thus 'received her with open arms,' really meant only to wait for her father's death in order to give the poor girl, who had thus thrown herself wholly on his honour, that position of a wife to which her beauty, her affection for him, and her then unsullied good name, conspired to entitle her.

By Mary Clement he had five children, two sons and three daughters; and it is due to his memory to add that he took every care which the fondest of fathers could take of their education. As children they were all remarkably handsome, like their parents. Her first boy appears to have died in childhood, having been probably carried off by the measles or the

small-pox, which at that time claimed its annual tribute of victims from every house of 'the upper ten thousand;' but of the three girls, as they grew up to womanhood, a contemporary writer of gossip avows his firm belief that, if the three Graces of the heathen poets returned to earth, it was doubtful whether they would be more afraid of the fair Walpoles or of the fair Gunnings as rivals. After the birth of her fifth child, the poor devoted Mary Clement herself died, at the age of only four-and-twenty, her little son soon following her to the grave. Deep was the grief of the father of her children; and, although no plain gold ring had symbolised and blessed their union, he mourned her early death as any fond husband would have mourned the loss of the best and most affectionate of wives. But I must hasten on.

Mr. Edward Walpole was now not only a member of Parliament, but the holder of more than one lucrative appointment under the Crown, and his father was in the zenith of his power as Prime Minister. Free from all the ties which the life of Mary Clement might have imposed upon him, still young and handsome, and with as brilliant prospects before him as any young man of his day, his position would have entitled him to think of marrying into any of the best families in the kingdom, with whom doubtless his three handsome daughters would not have been serious impediments; but he never would think or talk of marriage: his love was buried in the grave of Mary Clement, and his only thought was for her children. At all events, if at any time he entertained any ambitious desire of elevating himself, it was only with a view to their elevation that he coveted the distinction. He was installed a Knight of the Bath in 1753; and when the Duke of Devonshire became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Sir Edward Walpole was appointed Chief Secretary, and sworn a member of the Privy Council. He subsequently returned to England, and became Joint-Secretary of the Treasury—a post which no doubt he preferred to his splendid exile in Dublin, as it brought him

back to that London life which he loved as well as did his brother Horace.[1]

The three daughters of Sir Edward were respectively named Laura, Maria, and Charlotte ; they were elegant, lively, and highly accomplished, and of good temper and wit they had their full share. The portraits of Laura and Charlotte were painted in a single picture by Ramsay, and that of Maria by Sir Joshua Reynolds. At the Strawberry Hill sale these pictures fetched respectively fifty and seven hundred guineas. The ladies were already reckoned among the chief beauties of their time, and they excited the admiration of everyone who had the happiness of enjoying their society. Granddaughters of the Prime Minister, and as amiable as they were lovely, they might fairly have appeared worthy of the affection of the proudest nobles of the land. To any such idea, however, their left-handed birth opposed what—strange to say in a day when the King's German mistresses were raised wholesale to the peerage of England—appeared at the time an insuperable bar. They were known, not as Misses Clement, but by their father's name ; but, by the prudish rules of St. James's, they could not be presented at that Court, where ladies by no means respectable were received wholesale ; and so of course 'those Miss Walpoles,' as no doubt the Duchess of Kendal and Lady Walsingham snubbingly styled them, were never recognised by persons who could boast of an unsullied descent so far as appears in the records of the Heralds' College.

On the other hand, Horace Walpole himself, be it said to his credit, was very partial to his brother's daughters, and constantly invited them to Strawberry Hill. Indeed, as might have been expected from one who combined as much as he did of the republican with the courtier, he was very proud of them one and all, notwithstanding the bend sinister which marked

[1] It is said of Horace Walpole that he once whimsically declared at Strawberry Hill that he would like to be a doctor if only for one reason —that he might continually write for his patients one grand recipe for all complaints: 'Recipe Haustus ccclxv. auræ Londin. in diem sumendos.'

their escutcheon, or, if I must speak heraldically, their 'lozenge.' His friends and correspondents record that he would gladly leave any of his favourite occupations, even his collections of old china, in order to attend upon his favourite nieces ; and it was almost always a grand and festive day when the lord of Strawberry Hill announced that he was to welcome the Walpole beauties within its Gothic walls. But there were younger men than 'dear Uncle Horace' who were ready to leave their pursuits and professional studies in town in order to pass an afternoon in their charming society ; and the lesser Court of King Horace at Twickenham proved no contemptible rival to the greater Court of King George and his Queen at St. James's.

In fact, the beauty and real goodness and worth of the Walpole girls conspired with the lax code of morality in the highest circles to break down the barriers which as yet stood in their way. Added to this, the prejudices which had hitherto kept members of aristocratic families from matching with young women of plain and untitled families were gradually passing out of date. Had not plain Sarah Jennings worn the ducal coronet of Marlborough, and ruled as a queen of society, even over kings and queens and courts ? And were the granddaughters of Sir Robert Walpole, though not born in wedlock, to be debarred from the outer circle of a court where even the marriage of a lady was no guarantee of her correct conduct ?

The first young man of good birth and high prospects—be it said to his credit—who resolved to set this code at defiance, was the Hon. and Rev. Frederick Keppel, a younger brother of the Earl of Albemarle. He was a clergyman of good character and fair position, already holding preferment in the Established Church, and one who not unreasonably might look forward to the prospect of further promotion. He much admired Laura, the eldest of the three, and he thought he saw in her those qualities which would make a good wife for a clergyman. He knew the history of Mary Clement, and in

spite of it he resolved to propose for her daughter. Horace Walpole thus writes on the subject:

'I have forgot to tell you of a wedding in our family; my brother's eldest daughter is to be married to-morrow to Lord Albemarle's brother, a Canon of Windsor. We are very happy with the match. The bride is very agreeable, sensible, and good, though not so handsome, perhaps, as her sisters. . . . The second, Maria, is beauty itself. Her face, bloom, eyes, hair, teeth, and person, are all perfect. You may imagine how charming she is when I tell you that her only fault, if one must find one, is that her face is rather too round. She has a great deal of wit and vivacity, with perfect modesty.'

Mr. Keppel, already Canon of Windsor, my readers may be glad to learn, lived to mount the ladder of further promotion, and died Bishop of Exeter; nor did I ever hear that he found cause to regret the choice that he made when he married the daughter of plain Mary Clement. As the untitled daughter of that untitled lady, the doors of St. James's had been closed against her; but as 'the Hon. Mrs. Keppel' she at once appeared at Court, and was duly presented to the King and Queen 'on her marriage,' as is written in the book of the chronicles of the 'Court Circular' of the day.

It is needless to state that after this marriage of the eldest sister, the chances in favour of the beautiful Maria and Charlotte making 'good matches' increased wonderfully, and that they soon found as good a market to carry their matrimonial wares to as they could have found at the 'Drawing Room' of royalty. In fact, the sisters-in-law of the Keppels appear to have been sisters-in-love as well as sisters-in-law; and in general society the prejudices which for a time had stood in the way of the young ladies' advancement soon began to crumble away. Introduced into general society by the Keppels, they were received everywhere among the Suffolk county families, Maria, the beauty of the family, creating a marked sensation wherever she appeared.

Among the numerous admirers of the belle of the season

was a certain noble earl, of high and noble descent, who, though not quite young, nor yet quite advanced in years, thought himself not too old to take a young wife. Maria Walpole, he thought, was by far the most lovely woman that he had ever seen, at all events that he knew ; but then it was the old story—'there were objections,' strong, though possibly not insurmountable. His lordship, who was no other than James, second Earl Waldegrave, had held the highly respectable post of Governor and Privy Purse to the Prince of Wales ; he was also Privy Councillor, a Knight of the Garter, and a Teller of the Exchequer ; and it would scarcely be becoming, he thought, to fly in the face of his royal master, and offend courtly propriety by marrying a lady whom the King and Queen could not possibly recognise, even though that lady was a Walpole. But while Lord Waldegrave was striving to digest his scruples, and to weigh his interest against his inclinations, he found the prize within his reach was daily becoming more and more precious in the eyes of several persons of distinction who had similar opportunities with himself of observing how much more lustre the matchless face of Maria Walpole would add to a coronet than a coronet would add to her face. The Earl also could not but remember that he was already four-and-forty, and that there were plenty of younger rivals in the field who would be likely to take advantage of any indecision on his part. Indeed, he was given to understand by one of those kind lady friends who love to have a finger in the pie of every match-making arrangement, that with his lordship it was a question of 'now or never,' and it was no season for shilly-shallying.

The result was, as might have been expected, that the Prince's Governor and Privy Purse, Earl, Privy Councillor, Knight of the Garter, and Teller of the Exchequer though he was, came to a decision to follow the example of Mr. Keppel, and lay his honours and coronet at the feet of the daughter of the poor tailor's apprentice. Accordingly, in the year 1759, Maria Walpole became Countess Waldegrave, and, like her

elder sister, was duly 'presented at Court.' Lord Waldegrave, it may be remarked, had some pretensions to unite himself with so intellectual and literary a family as the Walpoles, as being one of the 'noble authors' of his day. He had composed a volume of 'Historical Memoirs,' extending from 1754 to 1758; a work with respect to which it is remarked with some *naïveté* by Mr. Eliot Warburton, that 'it is true he was the historian of rather a short period; but then it must be remembered that in four years much may be done, and, therefore, much may be written about it.' His lordship, I believe, never found reason to regret his choice; and he had three daughters by his countess, who proved as good a mother as wife. Four years after her marriage, and just after the birth of her last child, the Earl was struck with the small-pox, of which he died. She nursed him, however, through his illness with all care and affection, and regardless of all consequences to herself, as I learn on the testimony of her uncle Horace; and she deeply lamented his loss—indeed, for many a long month she was inconsolable. To her own prospects, apparently, the loss of Lord Waldegrave was a severe blow, as only a few days before his last illness he had been offered the choice of two splendid appointments—the Ambassadorship at Paris or the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland.

It was long before the widowed countess would venture again into society; but society felt that it had a claim upon her, and was not slow to enforce its claim. More lovely than ever on her reappearance in fashionable circles, the youthful widow drew on herself more admiring eyes, if possible, than she had done in her early maiden days. Her three little girls engrossed all her attentions and affections. Many of the first and highest nobles in the land sought to share their honours and possessions with the charming relict; but the Countess was obdurate, and a long train of rejected suitors, with the Duke of Portland at their head, passed away from her doors.

But the whirligig of time brings round its revenges. A few years of widowhood had passed by, when another pre-

tender to the widow's hand entered the field, and the very lady against whom only seven brief years before the doors of 'our Palace of St. James's' were closed and barred was now sought in marriage by the King's own brother. 'A singular union indeed,' as Mr. Eliot Warburton remarks, 'of the two extreme links of the social chain took place when H.R.H. William Henry, Duke of Gloucester, in 1766, espoused the daughter of the unfortunate Mary Clement—a marriage in virtue of which it was not only possible,[1] but quite probable, that a descendant of the tailor's apprentice might in course of time take his or her seat upon that very throne to which her own daughters had been denied all approach.' The issue of this second marriage was (1) a son, Prince William Frederick, Duke of Gloucester, who married the Princess Mary, daughter of King George III., and died in 1834 ; and (2) a daughter, the Princess Sophia, who died unmarried in 1844. It may be interesting here to record the fact that Maria's three little girls by her first husband all lived to grow up and married well ; the eldest becoming the wife of her cousin George, fourth Earl Waldegrave, and eventually the owner of Strawberry Hill ; the second marrying George Henry, fourth Duke of Grafton ; while the third married Admiral Lord Hugh Seymour, the great-grandfather of the present Marquis of Hertford.

And do my readers wish to know the matrimonial fate of Charlotte, the youngest of the three of the Walpole beauties ? She was married in 1760 to Lionel, Lord Huntingtower, afterwards fourth Earl of Dysart in the Scottish peerage. But they shall hear the story in the words of her uncle Horace. He writes under date Oct. 2, 1760 :

'I announce to you my Lady Huntingtower. I hope you will approve the match . . . . I suppose my Lord Dysart will, as he does not yet know, though they have been married these two hours, that at ten o'clock this morning his son

[1] What is known as the Royal Marriage Act, passed at the instance of George III., was one of the consequences of this union.

married my niece Charlotte at St. James's Church. The moment my Lord Dysart is dead, I will carry you to see Ham House. It is pleasant to call neighbours cousins, with a charming prospect over against one. And now, if you want to know the detail, there was none. It is not the style of our little Court to have long negotiations ; and we do not fatigue the town with exhibiting the betrothed parties for six months together in public places. *Venit, vidit, vicit.* The young lord has liked her for some time ; on Saturday sen'night he came to my brother and made his demand. The Princess did not know him by sight, and did not dislike him when she did ; she consented, and they were to be married this morning : my Lord Dysart is such a fool that nobody will pity him. He has kept his son till six-and-twenty, and would never make the least settlement on him. "Sure," said the young man, "if my father will do nothing for me, I may please myself ; he cannot hinder me of 10,000*l.* a year, and 60,000*l.* more that are in the funds, all entailed on me on a reversion," which one does not wonder that the bride did not refuse, as there is present possession too of a very handsome person, the only thing his father has ever given him.'

In another letter the chatty and communicative old uncle thus tells the story in its full details, which are too amusing to be lost to my readers :

'My brother's last daughter, Charlotte, is married, and . . . . though their story is too short for a romance, it will make a very pretty novel ; nay, it is almost brief enough for a play, coming very nearly within one of the unities, the space of twenty-four hours. There is in the world . . . . and he lives directly over against me, across the water, a strange brute called the Earl of Dysart. Don't be frightened : he is not the bridegroom. His son, Lord Huntingtower, to whom he gives but 400*l.* a year, is a comely young gentleman of six-and-twenty, who has often had thoughts of trying whether his father would not like grandchildren better than he does his own children. . . . . All the answer he could

ever get was that, as he had five younger children, the Earl could not afford to make any settlement; but he offered, as a proof at once of his inability and his kindness, to *lend* his son a large sum of money at a low interest. This indigent earl has thirteen thousand a year and sixty thousand pounds in the funds. This money, and ten out of the thirteen thousand, are entailed upon Lord Huntingtower. The young lord, it appears, had been in love with Charlotte for some months, but thought so little of inflaming her that yesterday fortnight she did not know him by sight. On that day he proposed himself as a son-in-law to my brother, who with much surprise heard his story, but excused himself from giving an answer. He said he would never force the inclinations of his children; he did not believe his daughter Charlotte had any engagement or attachment, but she might have; he would send for her, and know her mind. She was with her sister Maria, to whom she said very sensibly, "If I were but nineteen, I would refuse point blank, for I don't like to be married in a week to a man I never saw. But I am two-and-twenty. Some people say I am handsome, and some say I am not; but I believe the truth is that I am likely to be at large and to go off soon. It is dangerous to refuse so great a match." Take notice of the words "married in a week." The love that was so many months in ripening could not stay above a week. She came and saw the impetuous lover, and I believe she was glad that she had not "refused point blank," for they were married last Thursday. I tremble a little for the poor girl; not to mention the oddness of the father, and twenty disagreeable things that may be in the young man, who has been kept and has lived entirely out of the world. He takes her fortune, and cannot settle another shilling upon her till his father dies, and then promises only a thousand a year. Would one venture one's happiness, and one's whole fortune too, for the chance of living to be Lady Dysart? If Lord Huntingtower dies before his father, she will not have a sixpence. Surely my brother has risked too much!'

In a letter of subsequent date the gossiping old uncle follows up the subject with a story too good to be omitted here :

'Lord Huntingtower wrote to offer his father eight thousand pounds of Charlotte's fortune if he would give them a thousand a year at present and settle a jointure on her. The Earl returned this truly laconic . . . . answer : "Lord Huntingtower.—Sir, I answer your letter as soon as I receive it. I wish you joy. I hear your wife is very accomplished.—Yours, DYSART."

'I believe my Lady Huntingtower must make it convenient that Lord Dysart should die, and then he will. For myself, I expect to be a very respectable personage in time, and to have my tomb set forth like the Lady Margaret Douglas, that I had four earls for my nephews, though I never was one myself. Adieu.'

The 'strange brute' of an earl died in 1770, and Charlotte, Lady Huntingtower, thereon became Countess of Dysart. She died, however, issueless. Horace Walpole's prophecy, however, was never quite fulfilled ; it is true that his nephew, George, a queer, eccentric, and half-cracked creature, became third Earl of Orford, and that two of his three nieces wore the coronets of countesses, namely, those of Waldegrave and Dysart ; but Laura was obliged to be content with seeing her husband hold a spiritual peerage, which gave no coronet to herself. Horace Walpole, however, made up for this deficiency in two ways : first by his second niece becoming a princess of the blood royal ; and secondly, by succeeding, though late in life, to his nephew's earldom, a title which became extinct at his death, though revived subsequently in another branch of the family.

In conclusion, I must add that Sir Edward Walpole's son, Edward, the brother of the beauties whose stories I have attempted to tell, entered the army, and distinguished himself while a subaltern by an act of gallantry which will be found duly recorded in the Walpole Letters. His name is not men-

tioned in the 'Peerages' along with those of his sisters; but it is satisfactory to know that he rose to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Of his ultimate fate I have been able to learn nothing.

THE WOOING OF SIR HENEAGE FINCH.[1]

The name of Heneage Finch is one which for nearly two centuries has held a foremost place both in the pages of the peerage, and also among those Englishmen who have gained distinction as 'learned in the law' or as leaders in affairs of State. Every Earl of Aylesford in succession, from the first peer, who was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in the reign of George I., down to the last holder of the title, representing no less than seven generations, has borne that name; and the first Lord Aylesford himself was the distinguished son of an even more distinguished father, Heneage Finch, who, having been one of the leading members of the Parliament which restored King Charles II., became successively Solicitor and Attorney-General, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and ultimately was advanced to the woolsack and created Earl of Nottingham. This Sir Heneage Finch, while in the prime of manhood, was not only Treasurer of the Inner Temple, but also 'Autumn or Summer Reader' of that society, and in that capacity he gained a high reputation for his practical and common-sense application of the general principles of the law—a subject which as yet had not been taken in hand by Judge Blackstone. His 'readings' in the Temple, we are told, were very popular and quite the fashion of the day: so that we must not be surprised to find that they were attended by many members of other professions and the wits and courtiers of the second Charles; and that he brought them to a conclusion by a grand entertainment which he gave to the King and his Court in the great hall of the Temple,

[1] It may be desirable to state that this was written before I had seen an article on the same subject in *Temple Bar* for July 1872.

where a play or 'masque' was performed by the students in presence of his Majesty.

But if we go yet another generation back, we shall find that this Lord Chancellor's father was also a Sir Heneage Finch, and a man of some note in his day. At all events, he was Serjeant-at-Law, Recorder of London, and Speaker of the House of Commons under King Charles I. in 1626.

It is this Sir Heneage Finch the story of whose second wooing I now propose to tell. By his first wife, a daughter of Sir Edmund Bell, of Beaupré Hall, Norfolk, he had a family of seven sons and four daughters, so that he must have been well forward in years—or at all events, as they say, no chicken—when he first set his eyes on a rich and charming widow, one Mistress Elizabeth Bennett, the daughter of a Staffordshire gentleman named Cradock, and whom the recent death of her husband, Richard Bennett, a citizen of London, and a parishioner of St. Olave's, Jewry, had left at her own disposal, together with a good round sum of money and other property.

By the custom of London, and by the will of her departed lord, it appears that she was in actual possession of two-thirds of her husband's goods and chattels, besides jewels and chains of pearl and gold, and some splendid diamond and other rings, to say nothing of the family plate, the family coach, with four 'grey coach mares and geldings,' and other good things to boot. In addition to these substantial recommendations, she seems to have had no small share of personal attractions—with a full consciousness of their value, no doubt—and no more drawbacks and incumbrance than one little boy. In those days, although the 'Duke of Roussillon' was not born or thought of, it was scarcely necessary for a pretty widow to advertise for a husband; and the fair Mistress Bennett accordingly had no lack of suitors for her hand and heart.

Much to the amusement of the wits who moved about in London society at that time, three of the most conspicuous among the rival candidates bore the names of birds—Sir Sack-

ville Crow, a physician named Raven, and the Sir Heneage Finch whom we have already introduced to our readers; and besides these we have on record a fourth suitor, Sir Edward Dering, of Surrenden Dering, in Kent, and sundry other titled and untitled individuals, whose names we shall have occasion to mention presently.

The course of true love, in the case of Sir Heneage, appears to have given the lie to the old proverb by 'running' tolerably 'smoothly.' It is true that he had no lack of rivals; and, though it might be supposed that the chances were in favour of a man, like himself, who had filled the Speaker's chair, and must therefore have been of courtly and commanding presence, and who had the still more substantial endowments of a town house, and also an estate and mansion at Kensington,[1] with high Court connections to boot, yet for several months it seemed as if he was not unlikely to be distanced in the race by one of the aforesaid birds, and still more by the Kentish squire, Sir Edward Dering, whose efforts to win the hand and heart of the pretty widow were equally artful and persistent. It is from one of the old manuscripts preserved among the archives of Surrenden Dering, and given to the world under the auspices of the Camden Society,[2] that I may gather such information on the subject as I am enabled to lay before my readers.

The lady's first husband had died only in the April of 1628, but by the end of that year she was already besieged by a host of worshippers, all more or less bent, we may believe, on securing a share of her money;

> Juventus
> Non tantum Veneris quantum studiosa culinæ;

[1] The house is said to have stood very nearly on the site now occupied by Kensington Palace, and part of Kensington Palace Gardens formed part of Sir H. Finch's landed estate.

[2] Proceedings in the County of Kent; from certain MSS. in the possession of Sir E. Dering, Bart., at Surrenden Dering. Edited by the Rev. L. B. Larking. Published by the Cambridge Camden Society. 1862.

for it was publicly reported at the time that she was 'a twenty-thousand-pound widow.' The first bird who flew citywards to find her out was apparently a wise specimen of his kind; at all events, Sir Sackville Crow, for such was his title, was making a desperate effort at that time to relieve himself from the consequences of a serious deficit in his public accounts, which shortly afterwards compelled him to retire from his office of Treasurer of the Navy. He came, he saw, he proposed, and he did *not* conquer. The widow, though amorously inclined, was not to be easily caught; he had to return to his nest discomfited, and we do not hear of him again eastwards of Temple Bar.

The next person who tried his luck with the widow was determined not to be so easily baffled, and accordingly resolved to take her literally by assault. This was Dr. Raven, a fashionable and successful physician of the day. In despair of other and gentler means, this foolish man thought that Mrs. Bennett could be won by a *coup de main*, if the bold stroke could be made with sufficient vigour. Accordingly, by tampering with her servants, so as to silence her personal attendant or get her out of the way, he made his entry into the lady's chamber after she had retired to rest on November 19, in the year already mentioned. His reception was such as might have been imagined. The lady screamed 'Thieves!' and 'Murder!' so as to be heard by the 'Charleys' in Cheapside; the servants, male and female, rushed to the rescue; the doctor was secured, and handed over to the constable, who next day brought the intruder before 'Mr. Recorder.' As Mr. Recorder—in other words, Sir Heneage Finch—was himself one of the rival suitors for the lady's hand, we may imagine the pleasure with which he signed the order for committing Dr. Raven to durance vile until he could be brought to trial. The court refused to allow him to be bailed. He was ultimately tried, fined, and imprisoned for the affair; but the loss of his professional guineas no doubt was a still severer penalty.

On the next day Sir Edward Dering, as he tells us, was in

the field. His tale is told with much *naïveté*, and shows us that servants were as accessible to golden arguments as they were in the days of Jupiter and Danaë, or as they can be now. 'Nov. 20, Edmund the King. I adventured, but was denied. Sent up a letter, which was returned after she had read it.'

This repulse rendered it necessary to resort to other, and I fear that I must add crooked, means. Servants are amenable to bribes; and accordingly Sir Edward's diary continues: 'Nov. 21. I inveigled G. Newman with 20*s*.—Nov. 24. I did re-engage him (20*s*.). I did also oil the cash-keeper (20*s*.).—Nov. 26. I gave Edmund Aspull (the cash-keeper) another 20*s*.'

This looks unpromising, but it appears as if Sir Edward did not readily lose courage along with his cash. The next entry, consequently, shows a faint glimmer of hope: 'Nov. 27. I sent a second letter, *which was* kept.'

But in spite of his rising hopes, the worthy knight feels that he must not relax his efforts. Accordingly he writes, the same day: 'I set Sir John Skeffington upon Matthew Cradock.' This Matthew, I may remark, was a cousin of the widow, and her trusty adviser in matters of business. The diary continues, under the same day's date: 'The cash-keeper supped with me.'

Neither Sir John Skeffington, however, nor the 'cash-keeper' appears to have been of much practical use, or possibly they did not do their best on his behalf. Accordingly, Sir Edward begins to act seriously for himself: 'Nov. 30. I was at the Old Jewry Church, and saw her, both forenoon and afternoon.—Dec. 1. I sent her a third letter, which was likewise kept.'

On the following Sunday, Sir Edward, 'true to his tryste,' went to St. Olave's, when, on coming out of church, George Newman whispered in his ear, 'Good news—good news!' Sir Edward, who had taken a lodging in sight of the widow's house, pressed his informant to come in. George Newman—the same who had been 'inveigled' and 'oiled'—quietly and confidentially told Sir Edward that his lady 'liked well his carriage,

and that if his lands were not already settled on his eldest son, there was good hope for him.' The bearer of such good news certainly deserved a repetition of the oiling process, and accordingly, says Sir Edward, 'I gladly gave him another twenty shillings.'

Elated and hopeful, Sir Edward, in the course of the evening, proceeded to call on the Recorder. Sir Edward, being a man of Kent, very naturally stayed to supper, and as naturally grew very confidential as he drank the worthy knight's wine. Sir Heneage, too, grew confidential in his turn, gave him to understand that he quite despaired of success himself, and, indeed, meant gradually and quietly to withdraw ; in fact, he went so far as to promise his aid to Sir Edward's cause. So, in the course of the evening, the two suitors frankly and freely chatted over the widow and her affairs, and the Recorder put Sir Edward wholly off his guard. Good easy Kentish baronet ! you are no match for a lawyer like Sir Heneage Finch, let alone a wily and wary widow, whose choice in the matter is well known to him, as he carries the game in his hands.

It so happened that one great obstacle in the way of the widow's re-marriage was the wardship of her little boy, which belonged to a certain Mr. Steward, but which he was willing to relinquish for a money payment. The widow offered what she (and Sir Heneage too) thought a fair sum ; but he refused, and raised his price to so extortionate an amount that the widow refused to see him or speak to him again.

Sir Edward thought that this was the juncture to push his suit. It appears from the narrative that for a few days the lady, like many others, did not quite know her own mind, and would neither say 'yes' nor 'no ;' so, weary of waiting, on Jan. 1 he wrote and demanded the return of his letters and *billets-doux*. His cause was now irretrievably lost ; for, in spite of all arguments and recommendations in his favour from the lady's 'companion,' Mrs. Norton, and his friend, the celebrated angler and man-milliner of Fleet Street, Izaak Walton, and the

clever machinery of some dreams, real or fictitious, which were told to the lady in one of her softer moods by cousins and friends of the baronet, and the (of course) accidental waylaying of her little boy and his nurse in the fields of Finsbury, and plying them with cakes, wine, and money, the widow stood to her guns, and positively refused to think of him any more as a suitor. In fact (so she gave it out), she never meant to marry again at all. Suitors came and went. Great ladies from the Court—the cream of 'carriage folk'—visited the mansion in St. Olave's in shoals, and set forth the merits of sundry knights and gentlemen and lords, but all without effect. Lady Skinner called to plead the cause of one Mr. Butler; but her description of him as a 'dark, blunt-nosed gentleman' extinguished his hopes and ended his suit. Sir Peter Temple, of Stowe, a man of high birth, and the owner of lands which have since enriched the ducal house of Buckingham, came forward, backed by the aid of a dashing countess, but found only a cold reception, being told to go back to Buckinghamshire. The Countess of Bridgwater introduced the battered old sailor Sir Henry Mainwaring, who, in spite of his Cheshire pedigree, was steeped in poverty to the very lips, and he and another knight had an interview of an hour with the lady, but neither of them was suffered to call again. Lord Bruce, the head of the Bruces of Tottenham, now Earls and Marquises of Ailesbury—put in a claim for himself; but he too very soon retired. More persevering than the rest of the candidates for this very prudent Penelope, and, indeed, the only dangerous rival of Sir Heneage, was the newly-made Lord Lumley, whose chances were all the better as he came backed by one Loe, or Lowe, a brother-in-law of the lady herself.

The latter, it must be owned, lost no opportunity of prosecuting his suit by overt attentions to the widow. As being one of 'the devout female sex,' it appears she went to daily prayers at St. Olave's Church; and accordingly five times in one week did the coach of Lord Lumley stop the way at the door of the church in Old Jewry, its owner being intent on

worshipping there, though possibly the rich widow may have been one object of his worship. His suit was backed by no less a person than the Earl of Dorset, Lord Chamberlain to the Queen, an influential person in the political world, and especially at the Admiralty. But all was in vain ; weeks and weeks drew on, yet the lady was still obdurate : she would not listen, she said, to any proposal of matrimony ; her mind had been long made up. Izaak Walton now again appears upon the scene, to plead once more the cause of his old friend, Sir Edward ; but her answer was the same. Lord Lumley had even proceeded so far at one time as to present her with a ring, which she accepted at his hands ; but it was not a plain gold one, and on February 14 his hopes were crushed by the return of this pledge of attachment.

And so it was : the widow all along, at all events from the preceding Christmas, *had made up her own mind* ; but, like most rich and pretty widows, not at all in the direction of a life-long celibacy. She did not use the deepest of black-bordered note-paper, or mount a long, flowing, white widow's cap on a robe of black silk, talk of herself as a 'wreck,' and of her life as a *vie manquée*, and carry on private flirtations in a dark room with charlatans and adventurers. But she kept her own counsel, and had her own way in the end ; and having contrived to delude Sir Edward into an idea that the resumption of his place as a suitor was not absolutely a fruitless and hopeless task, one fine morning she surprised both him and the fashionable world, and everybody else except the worthy Recorder of London, by going quietly, on April 16, 1629—after exactly twelve months of widowhood—to the Church of St. Clement Danes, where she was married, no doubt by special licence, to Sir Heneage Finch, with whom the affair no doubt had been pre-arranged ever since the previous Christmas. It may interest our lady friends to learn that Sir Edward Dering took his defeat in good part, and soon set about retrieving his lost ground, time, and trouble, by electing as his third wife—he had already buried two—a

daughter of Sir Ralph Gibbes, of Honington, Warwickshire, with whom, no doubt, he 'lived happy ever afterwards.'

Before I dismiss my notice of the pretty widow, it may be well to add that her son Simon—whom Sir Edward Dering treated with cakes in Finsbury Fields—became in the end a man of great wealth, which was carried by three daughters, his co-heiresses, into several noble families ; and that his uncle, Richard Bennett, or Bennet as the name is now spelt, was the ancestor of the Earls of Arlington and Tankerville. Of Mrs. Bennett's second marriage all that I know is bright and fortunate, except its brief continuance ; and it is probable that among the many suitors, both bachelors and widowers, who sought her hand, she really chose the best, or one of the best. Of the issue of Sir Heneage Finch's first marriage, three sons and one daughter lived to grow up ; and the eldest of these, named as his father, became Lord Chancellor of England and Earl of Nottingham, a title with which his descendants and representatives have joined the earldom of Winchilsea. By the pretty and wealthy widow, Sir Heneage had two daughters, Elizabeth, wife of Edward Maddison, Esq., and Anne, married to Edward, third Viscount and first Earl of Conway, ancestor of the present Marquis of Hertford. Sir Heneage, however, survived his marriage little more than two years, as he died on December, 5 1631.

THE DUCAL HOUSE OF LEEDS

Out of all the great families who have attained to the honour of a ducal coronet in England, most owe their existence either to the accident of being sprung from royalty by a left-hand marriage, or from successful statesmanship subsidised by a run of luck in the way of alliances with well-endowed heiresses. Some few dukedoms, I am aware—those of Wellington and Marlborough, for instance—have been purchased by a series of brilliant achievements in the field ; one, and

one only, so far as I know—that of Norfolk—is sprung out of the successful career of an able lawyer; but there is one house, namely, that of the Osbornes, Dukes of Leeds, in whose early history is to be found an episode of city life so strange and so singular that I need scarcely ask the pardon of my readers for introducing it to them here.

The romance to which I allude is over three centuries old, though it reads like an affair of yesterday. But before I come to tell it, I will beg my readers' patience while I sum up in a few words all that is known of the earlier history of the Osborne family. It is agreed among the heralds and the peerage-makers that the Osbornes were of considerable antiquity in Kent long before they attained to the honours of the peerage, or even to a title at all. We are told that one John Osborne, esquire and landholder, was seated at Ashford in that county as far back as the reign of King Henry VI., when his name is returned in a list of the local gentry as subscribing to the oath of allegiance. His lineal descendant, Richard Osborne, married a Kentish lady, Elizabeth Fylden or (more probably) Tylden; and *his* son, also Richard, marrying a Broughton of Westmoreland, became the father of a certain Edward Osborne, who, entering early upon a commercial life, served as one of the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex in the seventeenth year of Elizabeth's reign, and eight years later was chosen in due course Lord Mayor of London. He received the honour of knighthood at Westminster in 1584, and not long afterwards was chosen one of the representatives of the City of London in Parliament. He died in the year 1591, and was buried in the church of St. Dionis Backchurch, where a monument recorded, and perhaps still records, his public and private virtues. Collins, in his elaborate 'Peerage,' simply says of him that 'he married Anne, daughter and heiress of Sir William Hewitt, also in his time Lord Mayor of London,' adding incidentally also that 'Sir William died in the year 1566, when his said daughter, Anne, was just twenty-three years of age.'

Sir William Hewitt appears to have been a charitable and benevolent person. He was a benefactor to several of the hospitals of London, and to the poor of more than one parish. Thus he left to the poor in the hospital of St. Thomas's, Southwark (of which he was a vice-president), 20*l.*; and 4*s.* 8*d.* to every poor maiden that should be married within a year of his decease in two parishes in Yorkshire, with which it may be presumed that he was connected by family ties. The disposal of the rest of his property is already incidentally recorded in the present paper. By his will, dated January 3, 1566, I find he ordered his body to be buried in the church of St. Martin's, in Candlewick Ward (of which he was a parishioner), near to the place where his late beloved wife Alice was interred.

But, for the sake of my lady readers, I must not pass quite so rapidly over a marriage out of which such important consequences flowed to the Osbornes. Respectable, and even ancient, as the family might have been at Ashford, in Kent, it is pretty clear that they must have suffered severely in purse and pocket when, in the reign of Mary or of Elizabeth, Richard Osborne sent his eldest son—no doubt the eldest of a large family—up to London, to fight for himself the battle of life. And doubtless either a special Providence or a very lucky star looked down with more than a kind smile on young Edward Osborne, when the latter, at the age of eighteen or nineteen summers, reached London from Ashford, and entered the family of Sir William Hewitt and of Dame Alice Hewitt, of Philpot Lane, as an 'apprentice' to learn his trade. At that time youthful apprentices were not left to pass their time in suburban lodgings, walking backwards and forwards to their daily work, and, when the day's task was over, enlivening their evenings at theatres and music-halls. When they were bound as apprentices, they became inmates of their master's household, and were expected, as members of his family, to conform to the rules and regulations of the homes of which they formed a part. Of course, if their masters happened to have grown-up

or growing daughters, the young fellows had so many more attractions to keep them at home and out of mischief; and equally of course was it a matter of constant occurrence that the best and the worthiest of such apprentices were enabled to climb the first rung of the ladder of commercial advancement by securing the affections of one of the pretty and well-endowed daughters of their master. And it was only the old, old story, after all, that was enacted in the family of Sir William Hewitt, that I have to tell.

It appears that, having no other incumbrance but a daughter, and having made a fair fortune in business, Sir William and Lady Hewitt, with 'Mistress' Anne and their Kentish apprentice, had removed from the worthy knight's place of business in Philpot Lane, and were occupying a fashionable residence on old London Bridge, every arch of which, as shown in old pictures, was at time crowded with houses. The windows, on one side at least, looked down upon the never-ceasing ebb and flow of the Thames; and, as bad (or good) luck would have it, one day, while fair Mistress Anne was hanging her favourite bird in its cage outside the parlour window, she lost her balance and fell out into the river. It was fortunately just high water, so that she had not many feet to fall, and the tide was running very slackly; but the river was deep, and in a few minutes more she would have been drowned, had not the young gentleman from Kent, who counted swimming among the other accomplishments which he had learned at his native Ashford, thrown off his shoes and surcoat, and leaped into the water after her. It was the work of an instant. He caught by her hair the struggling maiden, and dragged her towards a barge which was passing through the bridge; the crew hove-to, and took on board the half-drowned lady and her preserver; and the latter being landed at the steps between the bridge and Fish Street Hill, brought back his prize, with no small joy and triumph, to her father's house, where doubtless every attention was paid to them both. It was fortunately summer, and so they both

escaped with no further bad results than a sound ducking, and possibly a slight cold.

Perhaps it was scarcely *à priori* probable that the matter would end there. Mistress Anne, as I have reason for believing, had long secretly admired the young gentleman of good family from Kent, who had been for so many months an inmate of her parents' house, and who in all matters, great and small, had shown himself a thorough gentleman in deed as he was by birth. He shot well with the longbow, whenever the young apprentices of the city went out to what is now Moorfields and Clerkenwell in order to try their skill. In winter time he was the best skater and curler among all the city youths; he could sing a loyal song with spirit; and was always in the best of tempers. In fact, if the truth must be told, she admired him above all the young men whom she had seen east of what is now Temple Bar; and into the far western region of the mansions of the Strand and of Westminster it had not been her fortune to have often entered, except on one day in the year when she went regularly with her papa and mamma in the family coach to visit an old aunt at St. Giles-in-the-Fields, 'from whom she had expectations.'

Edward Osborne also had long admired in silence the young lady whose cage-bird had given rise to this unexpected adventure, and the keen eyes of Dame Alice Hewitt had not been inattentive to the fact. The old people, too, were rich and without a son. What arrangement more simple, obvious, and easy than that Edward Osborne should become their son-in-law? The young people, for their part, took the same view of the matter as their elders; interest and inclination for once ran in the same direction; and within a fortnight from the day of the apprentice's bold leap into the Thames it was arranged that the banns of 'Edward Osborne, bachelor, and Anne Hewitt, spinster,' should be put up in their parish church.

As neither Sir William nor Dame Hewitt was at all disposed to forbid the banns, everything was soon settled; and

one fine morning in August 1559 the church bells of St. Magnus and the neighbouring parishes rang out a merry peal in honour of Edward Osborne and his fair young bride.

Sir William Hewitt, before his death, which happened at no very distant date, constituted his son-in-law, Osborne, executor of his will, along with two members of his own family; and while he left to his brother and nephews the place of business in Philpot Lane above mentioned, he bequeathed the bulk of his money to his only child Anne Hewitt, now Anne Osborne.

The accession of the money of the Hewitts to the exchequer of the Osbornes appears to have come just at a favourable moment, and to have given to that ancient house a chance of rising in the world—a chance of which its members were not slow to take advantage. Edward Osborne was wise enough not to play the fine gentleman, or to turn his back upon the city where his fortune had been and was still being made. He persevered in the mercantile career which he had chosen when a lad, and he resolved to stick to it faithfully to the last. Accordingly we find him filling the civic chair as Lord Mayor, and receiving the honour of knighthood; and when he died in 1591, Sir Edward Osborne was lamented as a good and upright citizen, and one of the worthiest magistrates of the city of London.

His wife brought him a son and two daughters. The latter married into the Offley and Peyton families respectively; while his son, entering the army, and fighting under the banner of the Earl of Essex in quelling a rebellion in Ireland in the year 1599, received from that nobleman the accolade of military knighthood. Sir Hewitt Osborne in his turn married Joyce, daughter of Thomas Fleetwood, Master of the Mint, and sister of Sir William Fleetwood, of Cranford, in Middlesex, who is styled by Collins 'Receiver of the Court of Wards.' By this lady he had a son, Edward, successively knighted and created a baronet by Charles I., who constituted him Vice-President of the Council for the North of England

and, on the breaking out of the Great Rebellion, appointed him Lieutenant-General of the Royal forces in the North. His son and successor, Sir Thomas, having taken a leading part in bringing about the Restoration, was made by Charles II. Treasurer of the Navy and Lord High Treasurer of the Kingdom, and was also raised to the English and Scottish Peerage as Lord Kiveton, Viscount Dunblane, and Earl of Danby. His lordship took a leading part as Chairman of the Committee of the House of Peers which, on the abdication of James II., in 1688, declared the throne vacant, and in that capacity warmly advocated the bestowal of the Crown on the Prince and Princess of Orange conjointly; he was consequently raised in 1689 to the marquisate of Carmarthen, and five years later to the dukedom of Leeds, which thus crowned the fortunes of the lineal descendants and representatives of that Edward Osborne who, just a century before, had left his native town of Ashford to enter as an 'apprentice' the household of Sir William Hewitt.

The ducal house of Leeds still continues to thrive and flourish, and its members to this day hold that the adventure of Edward Osborne on London Bridge was the first of a series of successes which retrieved the at one time doubtful prospects of the old Kentish family whom I mentioned at the beginning of this paper. Since that day, as generation after generation has succeeded, the Dukes of Leeds have absorbed into their line the representation, in part or entire, of the noble houses of Conyers, D'Arcy, and Godolphin, to say nothing of more than one descent from the royal house of Plantagenet. But who shall say that the honest and brave apprentice who saved fair Mistress Anne Hewitt from a watery grave is not well worthy to be mentioned in the roll of the House of Osborne, side by side with all and any of them, as one of those ancestors of whom its members have good reason still to be most proud?

AN EPISODE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CATHCARTS

If any of my readers will turn to the Cathcart title in the pages of 'Burke's Peerage,' he will see that the grandfather of the first Earl Cathcart, who was commander-in-chief of the expedition to Copenhagen in 1807, stands recorded as having been Charles, the eighth holder of the ancient Scottish Barony of Cathcart. This barony was conferred in 1447 by James II. of Scotland on Sir Alan Cathcart, great-great-grandson of another Sir Alan whose valour at the battle of Loudon Hill, in 1307, is thus immortalised in the ballad:

> A knight that then was in his route,
> Worthy and widht, stalwart and stout,
> Courteous and fair, and of good fame,
> Sir Alan Cathcart was his name.

Several of this Sir Alan Cathcart's descendants fell on the battle-field; for instance, one at Flodden, and another at Pinkie, both of whom were named Alan. In fact, the first of the line for four hundred years who was not named Alan by his godfather and godmother at the font was Charles, the eighth baron, who died in 1740, in the West Indies, whilst acting as commander-in-chief of the British forces. Sir Bernard Burke tells us that this nobleman was twice married; but he is very uncommunicative about his second matrimonial union, saying merely that he 'married secondly—(no date is given)—Mrs. Sabine, widow of Joseph Sabine, Esq., of Tring, but by that lady (who married after his decease Lieut.-Col. Maguire) he had no issue.' In a foot-note he adds: 'This is the lady of whom the extraordinary story is told of her having been confined for many years by her last husband, Colonel Maguire, in a lonely castle in the fastnesses of Ireland.' The details of this romantic story I am able to supply, and I trust they will act as a warning to charming widows not to think of marrying more than twice or thrice.

Lady Cathcart's Christian name I am unable to give, but she was one of the four daughters of a certain Mr. Malyn, or Malin, of Southwark, apparently a prosperous tradesman, who had a country villa at Battersea. I have ascertained that she made no less than four adventures on the stormy sea of matrimony, but still she rather outwitted herself in one of her ventures. Her first husband was a certain Mr. James Fleet, of the City of London, who is generally thought to have been the son and heir of Sir John Fleet, the same who filled the civic chair as Lord Mayor in 1693. All that I know about him is that he was lord of the manor of Tewing or Tewin, in Hertfordshire—probably confused by Burke with Tring, in the same county; and that on his death, while still young, she took as her second 'lord and master' one of his and her own near neighbours, a Captain Sabine, younger brother to General Joseph Sabine, of Queenhoo Hall, in Tewin. In 1738 I find her left again a widow, and quite at her own disposal; for she had no children or other incumbrances; and, as both of her husbands had been fairly well off, it is clear that the widow was not a bad speculation, even for

> A lord, with a coronet of gold
> And garter below the knee.

Accordingly, in 1739, she accepted the proposals of Lord Cathcart, who died, as I have said, before the end of the following year whilst in command of our troops in Dominica. It would have been well indeed for her if on his death she had resolved to give up all further thoughts of conjugal felicity.

But this was not to be. For three long years she wore widow's weeds, and no doubt wore them very becomingly, added to which she was only a little over five-and-thirty; and, as everybody knows, few women will own to that being 'any age at all.' But at the end of three years she met with a certain Irish gentleman, who so far captivated her fancy that, although he held, or said he held, a commission in the army of

the Queen of Hungary, she bought for him a commission as lieutenant-colonel in the British service.

I am able to record her motives for entering into these four successive connections. Her first marriage she contracted in order to please her parents, the second for money, and the third for a coronet and title. As for the fourth marriage, she would often say late in life, when she could afford to jest on such a subject, that she supposed that 'the devil owed her a grudge, and wished to punish her for her sins.' It may be presumed from what follows that in this supposition she was not very far wrong. It was also said that she managed to rule Lord Cathcart, but that in Colonel Hugh Maguire she at last met with her match, and perhaps something more. The Hibernian fortune-hunter, like others of our own day, wanted only her money. She had not been married to him many weeks when she found out that he cared not a straw for her, but only for her purse, her jointure, and her diamonds. Apprehending that he had made a plan for carrying her off forcibly, or to put her into a madhouse in order to possess himself of her property, she resolved to be 'on the safe side,' and accordingly contrived to secrete some of her jewels in the tresses of her long, dark hair, which she plaited rather carefully. Others she 'quilted' in the lining of her petticoats, and constantly wore them on her body, though in daily danger of losing them thereby. The Colonel had a clever friend at hand to help him, a *chère amie* of tender years, whom he had trained for his own purposes; and this young lady contrived so far to insinuate herself into the lady's confidence as to discover where her will was kept, and to reveal its whereabouts to the Colonel, who of course got a sight of it, and, finding that it was not wholly in his own favour, drew out a pistol and threatened once and again to shoot her.

She now lived in constant fear and dread of her *caro sposo*, though she does not seem to have plucked up enough courage to bolt off from him, and to appeal to her relatives for protection. In fact, she grew awfully nervous whenever

he approached her presence, and life began to be a burden to her.

One day her apprehensions proved not to be altogether groundless, for when the loving pair went out to take their daily airing in the family coach, and she proposed that the coachman should turn the horses' heads homewards, her husband showed his dissent in a rather demonstrative manner, and desired John to drive on further. On and on the coachman drove, and the horses trotted ; and in vain she remonstrated that they should never be back at Tewin for dinner, though she had a lady coming to dine. At length the Colonel, pulling out a pocket-pistol, told her that she might make herself quite easy about dining at home ; for 'My dear, we are on our way to Chester, and to Chester you shall go with me, whether you like or no.' Her expostulations were in vain, and vain, too, were her efforts, for the servants were in league with their master, who had bribed them with some of her gold.

Day after day passed by, and neither coach nor horses, nor the colonel, nor his lady appeared at Tewin. The neighbours began to suspect that something was wrong, and made inquiry. It was ascertained that on the evening of the day when they were missed, the colonel and his wife were seen twelve or fifteen miles from home, with the horses' heads turned to the north, and the Colonel gesticulating as if in a passion with his wife. So they consulted a magistrate in the neighbourhood, who advised that an attorney should be sent after him, armed with one of those legal weapons known as writs of 'Habeas corpus' and 'Ne exeat regno.' The attorney, accompanied by his clerk, was soon upon their track ; and as they had travelled with their own horses and by easy stages, he came up with the fugitives before they reached Chester. At a wayside inn, where they were baiting their horses, he presented himself to the landlord, and asked for the room where the runaway couple were lunching. But the Colonel was not deficient in expedients. The attorney was admitted by the

gentleman, who at first refused to let him see his lady, and threatened him with personal violence. But soon cooling down, on finding that the man of law did not know the lady by sight, he said that if he waited a few minutes he should see her and speak to her, adding, 'She is going to Ireland with me with her free consent.' It did not take many minutes for the Colonel to tutor the pretty chambermaid of the inn to personate his wife. On coming into the room, she bowed graciously, and inquired what the lawyer wanted of her. The attorney, as instructed by his employers, asked the supposed captive whether she was going off to Ireland of her own free will. 'Perfectly so,' said the woman. 'What more do you want?' 'Nothing, madam,' was the answer of the limb of the law, who was glad enough to escape from the room, and beg and obtain her pardon for making such a mistake ; and in another half-hour he was off on his way back to Hertfordshire, if not having done his business, at all events having earned his pay. So at least he thought.

But the Colonel was not so easily satisfied. It struck him that possibly the attorney might recover his senses and find out how he had been deceived, and so turn up again 'like a bad penny,' and perhaps delay or even stop his progress towards the sister isle ; so, in order to make assurance doubly sure, he sent after him two or three stout fellows, armed with bludgeons, telling them at the same time to plunder him not only of his purse, but also, above all, of the papers in his pocket. They followed Mr. Attorney, caught him up in a lonely part of the road, and faithfully executed their commission, for they knocked him about severely, and with threats of further injury carried off in triumph the pieces of parchment, which they speedily brought back to the inn.

When the Colonel found the two writs actually in his possession, he knew that at length he was safe ; and so he pursued his journey, not to Gretna, but to Ireland, the lady not daring to open her lips or show any further sign of an untractable nature.

Poor woman! At Holyhead she was taken on board a fishing-smack, and landed, after a stormy passage, in one of the lesser Irish seaports, where there were no police or Custom House officers to make awkward inquiries or to take notes; and as there were no telegraphs or newspapers, or other means of rapid communication between the two sides of the Channel, the Colonel had no difficulty in completing his journey and bringing the lady to the abode which he had destined for her reception. This was a lonely and moated mansion, far away from a town, and well out of the reach of inquisitive and inconvenient neighbours. Indeed, it is said that except the butcher's cart, which visited the place about once in ten days, nothing on feet or on wheels ever entered its gates, and that the grass grew thick upon the drive leading up to the front door. Two trusty keepers, a man and his wife, kept watch and ward night and day upon the unfortunate lady, who was regarded by them as a sort of amiable lunatic, and treated accordingly, though with extreme politeness.

That she was not, however, quite a lunatic Lady Cathcart showed in a very marked way; or, if she was insane, there was 'method' and something more 'in her madness.' Whilst in this state of confinement she was occasionally allowed to walk about the grounds, though the park gates were closed upon her, and she could not scale the park walls. One poor old woman came once a week to dig up the weeds which grew along the garden path; and of her she contrived to make a friend. Through this crone she managed to send the jewels which she had worn in her hair and in the quilting of her petticoats to an acquaintance of former years, by whom they were carefully and honestly preserved.

At last after several years, namely, in 1764, a release came to the unhappy prisoner. The Colonel had a fit in the night, and was found at daybreak dead in his bed. That morning saw her a free woman. It was necessary to communicate his death to his kith and kin in order that arrangements might be made for his funeral. They came to the house, and found

his widow anxious and ready to quit the spot where she had been so long immured; and they, on their part, were glad to come into a bit of property, even if it were only the lease of a lonely and tumble-down old grange. So she found her way to Dublin, where her jewels were restored to her, and the sale of one of them was sufficient to pay the expense of her journey by ship and the 'stage waggon' back to Hertfordshire. She made her way to her former residence at Tewin; but the dinner to which she and her husband were to have sat down on the eventful day of their flight was, of course, no longer on the table. Indeed, during her forced absence in Ireland the place had been let on lease by the Colonel to a 'responsible' tenant; and this gentleman declined to turn out until forced to do so by a writ of ejectment, which she brought at the next Hertfordshire Assizes. She attended these assizes in person, and the news of the success of her suit was greeted with cheers by large crowds of the good people of Tewin, who insisted on taking the horses out of her carriage and drawing her in triumph through the streets of Hertford.

She lived on for many years at Tewin, where she kept open house for her neighbours, and played a rubber at whist with all and any of them. Late in life she wore a sort of turban, which, though eccentric in its make, suited her features well; and it is among the traditions of the county that when long upwards of eighty she danced a minuet at the Assembly Rooms at Welwyn with the spirit of a young woman of a quarter of that age. What is better authenticated is that, in 1783, Lady Cathcart gave an annuity of 5*l.* to Tewin School, and that she died in 1789, in the ninety-ninth year of her age. She lies buried in Tewin Church, and the property which once was her own now belongs to Lord Cowper.

It will be remembered by readers of Miss Edgworth's novels that the story of Lady Cathcart's imprisonment is introduced by her, under another name, into her humorous Irish tale of 'Castle Rackrent.' They will not forget how the scapegrace, Sir Kit Rackrent, marries a young English

lady for the sake of her fortune, and brings her to Ireland, where he affects to quarrel with her because she professes to dislike sausages, and cannot endure to see pork on the table ; the real cause of offence, however, being that she refuses to let him have possession of a diamond trinket which she keeps about her person. In his well-feigned rage on the score of the sausages, he locks the lady up in her room, and keeps her in close confinement, until one day Sir Kit is brought home dead on a barrow, having been killed in a duel, when the lady regains her liberty.

The story of Lady Cathcart has also been told by Dr. W. Chambers, in a little topographical book, entitled 'A Week at Welwyn.'

AN EPISODE IN THE NOBLE HOUSE OF HASTINGS

In the whole compass of the history of the British aristocracy it would be a difficult task to find a more strange and eccentric personage than the Hon. Henry Hastings—hermit, sportsman, and centenarian in one—the second son of George, fourth Earl of Huntingdon, a contemporary of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. The main facts of his life, and the leading features of his character, were for a long time to be found only among the musty manuscripts of Anthony Ashley Cooper, the celebrated Earl of Shaftesbury, in the British Museum. Some of them, however, are portrayed in the 'Biographia Britannica,' and others are to be found in the 'Fragment of an Autobiography' by Lord Shaftesbury, published a few years since by Mr. W. D. Christie ; while for the rest, again, we must have recourse to the pages of that scarce and curious book, 'The Eccentric.'

Mr. Hastings is described by Lord Shaftesbury as being 'of Woodlands,' a mansion and estate in Dorsetshire, which he appears to have owned. But, instead of residing like a gentleman on his own property, he preferred, as I have already hinted, the life of a hermit, combining with it that of a sports-

man, and accordingly fixed his abode in the New Forest, over which King James gave him a forester's rights, assigning him also a lodge in its green glades to dwell in. In all probability the reason of his strange hermit life was a disappointment in love, which had thrown a dark shadow over his early years. As he died in A.D. 1639, he must have first seen the light of day in 1529, if there be any truth in the assertion that he was a hundred and ten years old at the date of his decease. Of this fact, however, there is no certain proof, for the parish registers in the days of our Stuart sovereigns were kept but carelessly at best ; and I have no wish to take up the cudgels and fight over again the vexed question of 'centenarianism.'

It may be supposed that, singing as he did the good old song, 'A life in the woods for me,' Henry Hastings kept clear of politics, and blessed his stars that he had not been born an eldest son, and so forced to wear a coronet. His business and tactics lay in quite another direction ; and Lord Shaftesbury gives us an amusing peep into the interior of the Hampshire forester's lodge. He says : 'His home was of the old fashion, in the midst of a park well stocked with deer, and near the house rabbits to serve his kitchen ; many fishponds too, and a great store of wood and timber. . . . He kept all manner of sport-hounds that ran buck, fox, hare, otter, and badger ; and hawks, long and short-winged ; he had also all sorts of nets for fishing ; he had a walk in the New Forest, and the manor of Christ Church. This last supplied him with red deer and river fish, but all his neighbours' grounds and royalties were free to him.' In fact, he seems pretty well to have realised in his person Pope's idea of the 'noble savage' ranging free 'in the woods.' We are sorry to add, however, that, in spite of his lonely life, he did not bear the very best of characters.

His hall was strewn with marrow-bones, full of hawks' perches, hounds, spaniels, and terriers, and his walls were hung around with the skins of foxes, polecats, rats, and other vermin, which he nailed to the panels. There always stood

two large arm-chairs near his fireplace, and it was seldom that they were not occupied with litters of puppies and kittens, which he would on no account allow to be disturbed while in possession. At table he always took a very spare and frugal meal, limiting himself to a single glass of beer or wine. But he never dined unattended by his dogs and cats, to keep which in order he always had laid before his 'trencher' a little white stick or wand some fourteen inches long. The windows and corners of his room, Lord Shaftesbury tells us, were filled up with arrows, crossbows, hunting-poles, hawks' hoods and bells, and last (not least) with rows of old green and greasy hats, with their crowns thrust in so as to hold ten or a dozen pheasants' eggs. He made it a point of duty and honour to have at dinner daily all the year round a plate of oysters, which came to him from the neighbouring town of Poole. At the end of the apartment which served as his parlour and primitive dining-hall there were two doors, the one of which led to his beer and wine closet, and the other into a room which had been designed as a chapel. But, although a fine Bible and Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs' both lay there in due form, he did not use the place for the purposes of devotion; indeed, if the truth must be told, it was no uncommon thing to find a hen turkey sitting in what ought to have served as a pulpit. When the pulpit was not required for the hen turkey's wants, he would use it as a storehouse for a gammon of bacon, a venison pasty, or a baked apple-pie, of which he was particularly fond.

The rest of the furniture of the house was as old and as strange as its master; and, as he kept no wife or servants, he could 'do as he pleased with his own.' He liked, however, a friend of his own sphere and rank of life to 'drop in' upon him occasionally, especially on a Friday, when 'he had the best of sea and fresh-water fish,' and a 'London pudding' by way of cheer. Occasionally, too, he would leave his solitude and go over to Hanley to play bowls with Lord Shaftesbury and other Dorsetshire gentlemen. This, however, did not

often happen ; for, nearly related though he was to him, Lord Shaftesbury held principles quite opposed to his own, so that they seldom met except to quarrel. In fact, as a writer in the 'Eccentric' remarks, 'two men could not be more opposite in their dispositions and pursuits ; for Henry Hastings, though king-appointed, was an independent character to the backbone, and Lord Shaftesbury used to declare that he never could bear the brutality of his manners, for he was fit only to live by himself as a hopeless misanthrope.'

In the inclosure which he fenced off from the surrounding park and forest, though he lived so solitary a life, he contrived to make a bowling-green, where he would play for hours by himself, chalking up the scores of 'right against left ;' and he must have kept himself *au courant* with the fashions of the day, if it be true that his footpaths were strewn with the fragments of old tobacco-pipes, since the 'noxious weed' was scarcely known in England when he was a boy. To keep up the pleasant delusion that he had company with him, he built in his garden a banqueting-room, where, seated by himself, he would give out imaginary toasts, and drink glasses of real wine to imaginary beauties. At times, however, when the fit took him, he would deck up this banqueting-room like a booth at a fair, and entertain some of the skilled poachers of the neighbourhood, from whom, though Ranger by the King's appointment, he did not object to receive stray gifts in kind, or hints of a practical nature. And, hermit as he was, he was so far from hating games and diversions, that he would entertain his rough and plebeian guests with cards and dice, giving each of them one glass of 'mum' or beer, and no more.

In the evening, by way of supper, we are told that he would take a single glass of sack, seasoned with the syrup of gillyflowers, which he stirred with a sprig of rosemary. The troubles of the times never touched or disturbed him ; safe in the glades of his Hampshire forest, he had forgotten the King, and the Court had forgotten him. A short time before his death he rode on horseback, and went a day's journey in order

to hear an old huntsman, who was himself turned ninety, relate the death of a stag that was said to be older than either of the pair. If so, the united ages of huntsman, stag, and Hastings must have been as near as possible three hundred years. There is a portrait of this Henry Hastings at St. Giles's House, near Wimborne, Dorsetshire, the seat of Lord Shaftesbury, and an engraving from the portrait will be found in the second volume of Hutchins's 'History of Dorset.' Tradition still records the fact that, in spite of his lonely life and patched dress, he showed in his manners the breeding of a regular gentleman, except in the one matter of swearing. Altogether, Henry Hastings must be pronounced to have been an original—such a man as you would not be likely to meet twice in a lifetime. Lord Shaftesbury describes him as having been 'low of stature, very strong and very active, with reddish flaxen hair.' He tells us that 'his clothes were always made of green cloth,' possibly in allusion to the fabled connection of his ancestor with Robin Hood and Little John, with Sherwood Forest and suits of 'Lincoln green;' and he adds, with a spice of sly satire, which he seems thoroughly to enjoy, that 'all of the latter, even when new, were never worth five pounds.'

Had Mr. Hastings married and had sons, it is more than probable that the present century would never have heard of the celebrated peerage case which gave the earldom of Huntingdon to the great-grandfather of the present head of the house.

THOMAS PITT, LORD CAMELFORD

THE sad story of the wasted life and tragical end of Thomas, second Lord Camelford, is one which cannot fail to awaken interest in readers of every rank, as an instance of a man who, though largely gifted with good natural qualities, and placed in a situation of life where, with good sense and right principles to guide him, he might have attained a high position in the

State, chose to sacrifice all his prospects to the waywardness of his disposition, and fell a martyr to his own folly.

Lord Camelford was the great-grandson of Robert Pitt, the famous Governor of Madras, who acquired a large fortune in India, the best part of two centuries ago, by the advantageous purchase of a certain diamond, which he brought back with him to England, and eventually sold at a great profit to the Duke of Orleans, at that time Regent of France. His lordship not only held a seat in the House of Peers, but he was extensively connected with some of the first families in the kingdom. His grandfather's brother was the 'great commoner,' William Pitt, and afterwards first Earl of Chatham. His father was consequently first cousin to William Pitt the younger and to the second Earl of Chatham ; and his own sister, Anne Pitt, was the wife of Lord Grenville, who, a few years after the date of which I write, became First Lord of the Treasury and head of the Ministry of 'all the talents.' The father, Thomas Pitt, the first Lord Camelford (so created in 1784), owned the fine family estate of Boconnoc, in Cornwall, which devolved upon his son, together with the coronet, while he was still in his minority.

Born in 1775, he received the first rudiments of his education under a tutor in the Canton of Berne, in Switzerland, where even as a child he showed a spirit and temper which, though manly and vigorous, was peculiarly moody, wayward, and untractable. He did not bear the character of a manageable boy at the Charterhouse (then under Dr. Berdmore), to which he was removed when about ten or twelve years old, and where he did not stay long, having shown an early taste for the roving and adventurous life of a sailor. It was not a difficult matter for a cousin of the Premier to obtain a commission in the Royal Navy, and accordingly in 1789 we find him joining, as a midshipman, the frigate 'Guardian,' commanded by the gallant Captain Riou, and laden with stores for the then infant colony of convicts which was settled at Botany Bay. The calamity which befell that ship was well

calculated to inure the young seaman to the perils of the sea ; and even at that time he showed the same contempt for danger which marked his career throughout, and which often partook rather of the nature of recklessness than of bravery. I need only say here that when all endeavours to save the 'Guardian' seemed hopeless, and her commander gave leave to such of her crew as chose to take to the boats, young Pitt was one of those who, to the number of ninety, resolved to stand by the ship and to share her fate with her gallant commander. In the end, after an escape little short of miraculous, the ship made the Cape of Good Hope in the condition of a wreck, and in September, 1790, the survivors found their way to England.

Undaunted by the dangers which he had encountered in the 'Guardian,' young Pitt on reaching London went straight to the Admiralty, and bringing such family influence as he could to bear upon 'My Lords,' obtained an appointment to join an exploring voyage which was fitting out under Captain Vancouver. He accompanied that officer in the ship 'Discovery' during part of his distant voyage ; but through his refractoriness and disobedience of orders, the result of his wayward and obstinate temper, he provoked his commanding officer to treat him with a severity which he would not endure.

Accordingly quitting the 'Discovery' in the Indian seas, he joined the 'Resistance,' commanded by Sir E. Pakenham, and soon gained the rank of lieutenant. It was while serving on board this ship that he heard the news of his father's death, and of his accession to the honours of the peerage. On returning home in 1796, the first thing he did was to send a challenge to his late commanding officer, Captain Vancouver, which that gentleman, on professional grounds, was obliged to decline. The wound, however, rankled deep in the breast of Lord Camelford, who threatened to chastise his superior officer Doubtless, had he been a plain, untitled lieutenant—Brown Jones, or Robinson—he would have been cashiered for disrespect ; but then he was a Pitt, and a peer, and cousin to the First Lord of the Treasury, so what could poor Captain Van

couver do? He did the only thing possible, namely, to sit down and digest his wrath; and the end was that he died of grief and pain, instead of a pistol-shot.

Having attained the rank of commander, when he had yet to learn how to command himself, though he had reached the 'age of discretion,' Lord Camelford was appointed next to the sloop 'Favourite,' on the West Indian station. We next hear of him at Antigua, where, on January 13, 1798, the 'Favourite' and the 'Perdrix' (Captain Fahie) were lying at anchor in harbour. Captain Fahie, it so happened, was absent at St. Kitts, and had left his lieutenant, Mr. Peterson, in charge of the 'Perdrix.' Lord Camelford, whether in the discharge of his duty or in mere wantonness, as being the senior officer, and consequently in command, issued some trifling order which the lieutenant did not feel bound to obey. Lord Camelford must have been a summary disciplinarian, for he called out his marines, and, asking Peterson if he meant to obey his order, and obtaining no answer or a refusal, he shot him dead on the spot. Lieutenant Peterson was much beloved in Antigua; and the excited populace were hardly restrained from dealing summary and probably fatal chastisement on his lordship; but they were calmed by an assurance that an inquiry into the matter should be made by court-martial. But the coroner's jury having brought in a verdict to the effect that Peterson had 'lost his life in a mutiny' and the court-martial having 'honourably' acquitted his lordship, the Admiralty at home let the affair pass into oblivion. Again it was not a Brown, Jones, or Robinson, but a Pitt who had shot a lieutenant; and the Pitts were a 'heaven-born' race. Some say, I know, that 'sin is not sin in a duchess,' and possibly the saying may be true; probably it is equally true that 'killing is (or was) no murder' when wrought by the hand of a peer of the realm. I doubt if the same law would hold good now as that which appears to have prevailed some four score years back in the history of the British navy.

After his acquittal, Lord Camelford assumed for a time

the command of his ship, but soon threw it up, at the same time quitting the profession in which he had earned such a character for daring and for discipline. 'While in the service,' says a writer of the time, 'his personal appearance was distinguished by the same eccentricity which marked his conduct through life. His dress consisted of a lieutenant's plain coat, without shoulder knots, and its buttons were as green with verdigris as the ship's bottom itself. His head was shaved close, and he wore an enormous gold-laced cocked hat.' It deserves to be remembered to his credit that, though he was so severe a disciplinarian, he showed himself particularly attentive to the comfort and relief of the sick.

He had not long returned to London when he took it into his head to plan a mad freak, which if he had been allowed to put it into execution, would probably have cost him his life, and have added seriously to the complications of the war with France, which just then was at its fiercest. His plan was to repair to Paris, and there, in the midst of that city, to attack personally and kill the rulers of the Republic. With this object in view, he took coach to Dover, where he arranged with a boatman to convey him across the Channel for twelve guineas, though the law at that time was so stringent as to make the very act of embarkation for France a capital offence. The compact, however, was betrayed to a local collector of the revenue, who accompanied his lordship to the boat, and arrested him in the act of stepping into it. The triumphant 'collector' lost no time in carrying his lordship back to London in a post-chaise, under a strong guard, and conveying him to the office of the Duke of Portland, at Whitehall. A meeting of the Privy Council was summoned, and I read in the account which I have already quoted, that 'after several examinations his lordship was discharged from custody, the Lords of the Council being satisfied that, however irregular his conduct, his intentions were only such as he had represented them to be, and that he had no other object in view except that of rendering a service to the country. His

Majesty's pardon, therefore, was issued under the Great Seal of the Kingdom, discharging his lordship from all the penalties which he had incurred under an Act recently passed, which, without reference to motive, made the mere act of embarking for France a capital crime.'

This was in January, 1799, when his cousin, William Pitt, ruled in Downing Street; and at least two months appear to have elapsed before Lord Camelford's name was again brought in any marked manner before the public, though he continued to live on in London, indulging by day and night too in a series of practical and sometimes offensive jokes, such as those for which the late Lord Waterford in our own day made himself so notorious. At one time I find him causing a riot at the box-office of Drury Lane (April 2, 1799), and insulting and assaulting one of the audience—a freak for which his lordship was tried before Lord Kenyon and a special jury, and sentenced to pay a fine of 500*l.*, though he had for his counsel that consummate advocate, Mr. Thomas Erskine, afterwards Lord Chancellor Erskine. On another occasion, when he and his boon companion, Captain Barrie, were returning home late at night, or rather early in the morning, as they passed through Cavendish Square, they found the 'Charleys' asleep. Of course it did not take a minute to wake them up, which was all very right—and to thrash them, which was all very wrong. At last the 'Charleys' sprang their rattles, and other more vigilant guardians of the West End streets rushed up; but it was not till they were overpowered by ten to two that Lord Camelford and his comrade were led off to the station-house. Next morning, as a matter of course, they were brought up to the Marlborough Street office, where a present of a guinea a-piece to the injured 'Charleys' enabled the sitting magistrate to declare the offenders discharged, with a warning not to repeat such conduct.

There was nothing in which Lord Camelford took greater delight than in standing out in direct contrast to the general public, and finding himself in a minority of one. Had he

frequented the House of Lords, he would, no doubt, have often been able to gratify this whim ; but his tastes led him to associate not with his 'peers,' in either sense of the term, but with the 'ignobile vulgus' of the London streets. For instance, though he had wished to go to Paris in order to end the war by a single blow, yet in 1801, when all London was lit up by a general illumination, no persuasion of his friends or of his landlord could induce Lord Camelford to suffer lights to be placed in the windows of his rooms. He lodged over a grocer's shop in New Bond Street ; and in vain did the grocer and his wife protest—he remained firm to his silly and wayward resolve. The mob, of course, attacked the house and saluted his windows with showers of stones. Irritated at the assault, Lord Camelford rushed out among the crowd with a pistol in his hand, and it seemed as if the festive day was doomed to be marked with blood. At last, however, his friend Barrie induced him to exchange the pistol for a stout cudgel, with which he laid about him right and left, until at length, overpowered by numbers, he was rolled over and over in the gutter, and was glad at last to beat a retreat indoors, filthy and crest-fallen.

In general, Lord Camelford was not one of that amiable class of young men who return to their nests at the end of the business of the day and 'dine at home' quietly and respectably. On the contrary, he lived chiefly at clubs and coffee-houses, where his presence had at least one advantage, namely, that of holding in check the insolence of the young puppies who haunted such *rendezvous* and gave themselves airs and graces. Indeed, whoever was brought into contact with his lordship in those days, when pistols were often carried, and duelling was in vogue, was speedily made to feel that he had better be careful as to what passed his lips, lest in an unguarded moment he should have to expiate with his blood the slightest slip of the tongue.

His irritable disposition and obstinate temper not only led him into quarrels and encounters beyond all number, but in the

end paved the way for the final catastrophe of his tragical death. It appears that for some time Lord Camelford had been acquainted with a certain lady named Simmons. Some officious person, either from a silly habit of talking, or out of sheer malice, represented to the touchy nobleman that a friend of his named Best had said to the lady something to his disadvantage. This ill-timed piece of information nettled his lordship, and rankled in his breast so much that on March 6, 1804, on meeting Mr. Best at the 'Prince of Wales' Coffee-house, he went up to him and said aloud, and in a tone to be heard by the bystanders, 'I find, sir, that you have been speaking of me in the most unwarrantable terms.' Mr. Best simply replied that he was quite unconscious of having done anything to deserve such a charge. Lord Camelford declared that he well knew what he had said to Mrs. Simmons, and called him a 'liar, and scoundrel, and ruffian.'

The use of epithets such as these, according to the established code of laws then current in society, left but one course open to Mr. Best, and a hostile meeting was at once arranged for the following morning. Each of the parties having appointed his 'second,' it was left, as usual, to the latter to fix the time and place. These were seven o'clock in the morning, and the fields behind Holland House at Kensington.

Meantime every means was being put in motion to supersede the necessity of a duel, or to prevent its occurrence, or at all events to stop it before a fatal result should ensue ; and I regret to add that it seems to have been wholly Lord Camelford's fault that these efforts proved unavailing. Later in the evening, Mr. Best, though he had been so grossly and wantonly insulted, sent to his lordship a strong assurance that the information which he had received was quite groundless, and that, as he had acted under a false impression, he should be quite satisfied if his lordship would withdraw the strong epithets which he had applied to him. But Lord Camelford refused to accept this kindly and sensible offer. Mr. Best then left the coffee-house, and some mutual friends or wit-

nesses among the bystanders lodged an information at Marlborough Street.

Notwithstanding the magistrates were thus early let into the secret, it appears that no steps were taken to prevent the hostile encounter until nearly two o'clock in the morning, by which time his lordship, who had gained a fair stock of experience in 'matters of honour' by this time, had of course taken good care to be 'off,' having ordered a bed at a tavern near Oxford Street.

During the night he made his will, bequeathing his estates to his sister, Lady Grenville. In this he inserted a clause in which, to do him justice, he wholly acquits his antagonist of blame in the affair, expressly declares that the quarrel was of his own seeking, and desires that in the event of his own death, and the law being put into force against Mr. Best, the King may be petitioned and requested in his (Lord C.'s) name to extend to him the royal pardon.

Early on the following morning, at the coffee-house in Oxford Street, Mr. Best made another effort to prevail on his lordship to retract the expressions which he had used. 'Camelford,' said he, 'we have been friends, and I know the generosity and the unsuspiciousness of your nature. Upon my honour you have been imposed upon by Mrs. Simmons; do not insist on using expressions which in the end must cause the death of either you or me.' To this Lord Camelford merely replied dryly, 'Best, all this is mere child's play; the matter must go on.'

Unable to come to terms at the coffee-house in Oxford Street, the two principals mounted their horses, and rode along the Uxbridge Road, past the wall which then bounded Kensington Gardens, as far as the 'Horse and Groom,' a little beyond Notting Hill turnpike-gate. At the 'Horse and Groom' they dismount, cross the road, and proceed at a quick pace along the path leading to the fields behind Holland House. The seconds measure the ground, and Lord Camelford and Mr. Best take up their positions at thirty paces. The

sun has lately risen, and one or two of the outdoor servants of Holland House are about the grounds; but while they wonder and stare the signal is given, and Lord Camelford fires. Either designedly or not, he fires without effect, and Mr. Best is a living man. A quarter of a minute elapses, the signal is repeated, and Lord Camelford falls forward on the ground. He is not dead, but he is mortally wounded: and oh, irony of ironies! he declares that he 'is satisfied.' He shakes hands with his antagonist, who runs to pick him up: 'Best, I am a dead man, and you have killed me; but I freely forgive you—the fault was mine.'

It was now time for Mr. Best to beat a retreat, and one of Lord Holland's gardeners was despatched for a surgeon. A chair was soon procured; and seated in it, and supported by the bystanders, Lord Camelford was carried off to Little Holland House, the residence of Mr. Otty, where he was attended by two surgeons, Mr. Thompson and Mr. Knight, of Kensington. In an hour more his faithful friend Captain Barrie was beside his bed, and so was his cousin, the Rev. William Cockburn, afterwards Dean of York.

From the first the surgeons gave little or no hope that the wound would prove anything other than mortal. The ball could not be extracted, and he lingered in great agony for nearly three days, when death put an end to his sufferings. So died Thomas Lord Camelford, at the early age of twenty-nine, by a death which, though not actually self-inflicted, was brought on by his own wayward obstinacy.

The estimate formed by Mr. Cockburn as to Lord Camelford's real character, and his testimony to the sincerity of the penitence of his deathbed, are alike striking. He writes:—

'Lord Camelford was a man whose real character was but little known to the world; his imperfections and his follies were often brought before the public, but the counterbalancing virtues he manifested were but little heard of. Though violent to those whom he imagined to have wronged him, yet to his acquaintances he was mild, affable, and courteous: a stern

adversary, but the kindest and most generous of friends. Slow and cautious in determining upon any important step while deliberating, he was most attentive to the advice of others, and easily brought over to their opinion; when, however, his resolutions were once taken, it was almost impossible to turn him from his purpose. That warmth of disposition which prompted him so unhappily to great improprieties, prompted him also to the most lively efforts of active benevolence. From the many prisons in the metropolis, from the various receptacles of human misery, he received numberless petitions, and no petition ever came in vain. He was often the dupe of the designing and crafty supplicant, but he was more often the reliever of real sorrow, and the soother of unmerited woe. Constantly would he make use of that influence which rank and fortune gave him with the Government to interfere in the behalf of those malefactors whose crimes had subjected them to punishment, but in whose cases appeared circumstances of alleviation. He was passionately fond of science, and though his mind while a young seaman had been little cultivated, yet in later years he had acquired a prodigious fund of information upon almost every subject connected with literature. In early life he had gloried much in puzzling the chaplains of ships in which he served, and to enable him to gain such triumphs he had read all the sceptical books he could procure; and thus his mind became involuntarily tainted with infidelity. As his judgments grew more matured, he discovered of himself the fallacy of his own reasonings, he became convinced of the importance of religion, and Christianity was the constant subject of his reflections, his reading and conversation. . . . I wish with all my soul that the unthinking votaries of dissipation and infidelity could have been present at the deathbed of this poor man; could have heard his expressions of contrition for his misconduct, and of reliance on the mercy of his Creator; could have heard his dying exhortation to one of his intimate friends to live in future a life of peace and virtue. I think it would have made

impressions on their minds, as it did on mine, not easily to be effaced.'

On the day after his death an inquest was held on the body of his lordship, when, strange as it may sound to the ears of those who have read this brief story, twelve wise and enlightened inhabitants of the country village of Kensington, for such it then was, brought in a verdict of 'wilful murder against some person or persons unknown.'

It is evident that Lord Camelford had in him the elements of a good naval officer, if his proud, obstinate, and wayward spirit could only have bent itself to the rules and requirements of the service. But from a child he would never obey, or fall in with even the reasonable wishes of parents and tutors. At school the same headstrong and wilful nature cropped out which he exhibited in the navy ; and he was true to it to the very end. In the codicil to his will, which he dictated whilst writhing in his mortal agony, he declared that, while other individuals desired to be buried in their native land, he wished to be interred 'in a country far distant—in a spot not near to the haunts of men, but where the surrounding scenery might smile upon his remains.'

But in this matter he was not destined to have his own way. Lord Camelford's body was brought back from Kensington to Camelford House, at the top of Park Lane, nominally his town residence ; and thence it was taken and deposited in the vaults of St. Anne's, Soho. Owing to the war, effect could not be given to his desire for interment in the soil of Switzerland, and his body still lies where it was first interred, in a magnificent coffin, covered with gorgeous red velvet, and surmounted by a coronet. It is perhaps the more necessary for me to record this fact, as the contrary is asserted by the late Charles Reade, in an article on Lord Camelford which originally appeared in 'Belgravia' for May, 1876, and is now included in a volume entitled 'The Jilt, and other Stories.' He says that the body was wrapped up in a common fish-basket, andthat it is not known now what became of it. But the

mystery is no mystery at all; for I saw the coffin, or, at all events, what the verger told me was the coffin of Lord Camelford, in the vaults under St. Anne's, Soho, about the year 1860; and the coffin might or might not have contained a fish-basket in the place of a 'shell.' I may add that a letter from the courteous owner of his lordship's seat in Cornwall, the Hon. George M. Fortescue, assured me that he never heard of any attempt, or even desire, on the part of the relations of the eccentric nobleman to bring his remains again into the light of day.

His fine property of Boconnoc Park, near Lostwithiel, in Cornwall, he left to his sister Anne, the wife of Lord Grenville. She outlived him sixty years, dying in the full possession of her faculties, at the age of ninety, in the year 1863. At her death, she bequeathed the estate to her husband's nephew, Mr. Fortescue, the gentleman mentioned above, and it is now owned by his son.

AN EPISODE IN THE EARLDOM OF PEMBROKE.

Next to the Howards, who undoubtedly stand first and foremost in the roll of English nobility, with their forty coronets all fairly won by them in 400 years, no family rises higher in respect of its honours than that of the Herberts. For not only do its male descendants in our day wear the coronets of three earldoms—those of Pembroke, Montgomery, and Carnarvon—but within a period quite historic they have borne at least two more, namely, those of Powis and Torrington, both now extinct in the male line; to say nothing of other dignities in the lower grade of barons, as Lords Herbert of Cherbury, Lords Herbert of Cardiff, Lords Herbert of Shurland, and, by recent creation, Lords Herbert of Lea. In addition to this they have made alliances with nearly all the greatest and noblest of our titled houses—the Talbots, the Greys, Dukes of Suffolk, the Sidneys, the Villierses, the Howards, the Arundells, the Paulets, the Scropes, and the Spencers; so that the

present Lord Pembroke, although not undisputed head and representative of the House of Herbert, has come, through the intermarriages of his ancestors, to hold four ancient baronies in fee, as Lord Ross of Kendal, Parr, Marmion, and St. Quentin. How all this comes about it would not be easy to show in detail without drawing out for my readers a long genealogical tree ; and those who wish to examine my statement for themselves can verify my words by the authority of Sir Bernard Burke, whose assertion of the fact, I own, is sufficient for myself.

If they will turn to his 'Peerage' and his 'Landed Gentry,' they will find that, in addition to the honours above mentioned, the main stem of the Herberts has produced several untitled branches of high worth and renown, such, for instance, as the Herberts of St. Julian's and of Magor, in Monmouthshire, the Herberts of Llanarth, in Wales, and of Cahirnane, in Ireland. Above all, with respect to the Herberts of Muckross, near Killarney, my friend 'Ulster' writes as follows : 'Since the merging of the elder branch of the Herberts in the family of Clive, by the marriage of the heiress of the last Herbert, Earl of Powis, with the son of the celebrated general, Lord Clive, the chieftainship of the name seems undoubtedly to rest with the Herberts of Muckross, in the county of Kerry, who are descended from Thomas Herbert of Kilcuagh, who went to Ireland under the care and patronage of his relative, Lord Herbert of Cherbury.' And then he proceeds to trace the descent of this Thomas Herbert from the eldest son of Sir Richard Herbert of Colebroke, only brother of William, Earl of Pembroke of the first creation, who—as may be read in the pages of Speed and Holinshed—suffered largely in purse and pocket for his adherence to the House of York in the Wars of the Roses.

It should be added that, while one of the earl's coronets belonging to the Herberts—namely, that of Powis—for a short time blossomed into that of a marquis, one of the fair Countesses of Pembroke was even more highly honoured by

the muses ; for to her Sir Philip Sidney dedicated his 'Arcadia, while Ben Jonson immortalised her memory in the well-known verses that will live as long as the English tongue :—

> Underneath this marble herse
> Lies the subject of all verse :
> Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother.
> Death, ere thou hast slain another
> Wise and fair and good as she,
> Time shall throw a dart at thee.

Further, it should be recorded that no less than two brothers, successively Earls of Pembroke, were also in succession the 'honoured lords and chancellors' of the University of Oxford, where a noble statue of one of them still graces the Bodleian Library ; and the reader will need scarcely to be reminded that the father of the present Earl of Pembroke was the good, the kind, the courteous, and amiable Sidney Herbert, the rising statesman, who, had he lived, would probably have been Premier of England, to whom it was no honour to be created Lord Herbert of Lea, so high did he stand before with Englishmen of all shades of politics.

When a single house can show so many of its members ennobled both by titles and by the higher dignity of personal merit, it is scarcely worth while to record such facts as that one Lord Pembroke was Lord Chamberlain to the Household of Charles I., and that another was 'chosen to carry the sword called "curtana" at the coronation of George I.' However, some of my fair readers may possibly like to 'make a note' of them. Let me, however, remind them one and all that the surname of the house ennobled by so many creations, and spread through so many branches, is said to be derived from two Anglo-Saxon words, 'Her' and 'Bert,' meaning 'illustrious lord,' a derivation in their case not wholly false in fact. I suppose too that, in order to do justice to antiquity and to show my respect for 'blue blood,' I ought to add that, according to the heralds, the Herberts are sprung from one Herbert, Count of Vermandois, who came over to England with the Conqueror, and held the office of Chamberlain to

William Rufus. He is mentioned in the roll of Battle Abbey as rewarded with a large grant of land in Hampshire, and as having married a daughter of Stephen, Count of Blois, granddaughter of William I. The first of the Herberts born in England, it appears, was his son, Herbert Fitz-Herbert, called Herbert of Winchester, who became Treasurer and Chamberlain to Henry I. His son held the same office under the second Henry, and his great grandson was summoned to Parliament as a Baron in A.D. 1294. If this be so, in all probability either Mr. Herbert of Muckross, or Lord Pembroke himself, might rightly put in a claim for a barony in fee nearly as old as that of De Ros.

I must, however, pass by all notice of him, and of his descendant, William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke, Chief Forester of Snowdon, and Constable of Conway Castle, the staunch adherent of the House of York, who, falling into the hands of the Lancastrians after the battle of Dane's Moor, in 1469, suffered attainder, and was beheaded at Banbury. His grandson, William, was installed a Knight of the Garter, and created Lord Herbert of Cardiff, and eventually obtained in his favour a fresh creation of the Earldom of Pembroke. He married a sister of Catharine Parr (the last wife of Henry VIII.), and became one of the most powerful noblemen of his day, taking an active part in public affairs as a soldier and as a statesman. It is recorded of him that 'he rode on February 17, 1552–53, to his mansion of Baynard Castle, in London, with a retinue of 300 horsemen, of which 100 were gentlemen in plain blue cloth, with chains of gold, and badges of a dragon on their sleeves.' Dying in 1570, he was buried in Old St. Paul's Cathedral, and with such magnificence that, if we may trust the old chronicler Stow, the mourning given at his funeral cost the large sum, at that time, of 2,000*l.* It was this nobleman's son Henry, the second earl of the new creation, and also a Knight of the Garter, whose third wife was the lady mentioned above as

'Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother.'

But from all these brilliant and pleasant reminiscences I must pass to my promised 'episode' in the noble House of Pembroke. It is by no means a pleasant one to relate, or, I fear, a creditable one to the otherwise spotless shield of the noble Herberts—men almost without exception *sans peur et sans reproche.*

It appears that Philip, the seventh wearer of the coronet of Pembroke, who came to the title in the reign of Charles II., stood out with an evil prominence even among the riotous and debauched nobles who hung about the Whitehall and St. James's of that day. In our own time we have seen a Lord Kingston month after month quarrelling at Charing Cross with Hansom-cab drivers, and a Lord Waldegrave and a Lord Waterford getting up rows in the Haymarket, knocking down policemen, and using their fists pretty freely in street brawls at the West-end—not always quite defensively. But these were comparatively innocents—quite 'lambs,' as they would be called at Nottingham—by the side of Philip, seventh Earl of Pembroke and fourth Earl of Montgomery. Of him we learn a little in a certain book of 'State Trials' which gives us a peep at his character. Let me only preface my 'episode' with one remark, that he was the grandson, not of the great Lord Pembroke, the ornament of the Court of King James I., but of his younger brother, who 'began life as one of James's favourites and parasites, was ennobled by the title of Earl of Montgomery, and finished a career in all its parts alike contemptible by being the first member of the peerage after the fall of the monarchy who sought (and obtained) a seat in the House of Commons.'

Philip, this nobleman's grandson, who became Earl of Pembroke as well as of Montgomery, on the death of his half-brother in 1674, according to an entry in the Lords' Journals, Jan. 28, 1678, was committed to the Tower 'for uttering such horrid and blasphemous words, and for such other actions proved upon oath, as are not fit to be repeated in any Christian assembly.' Bishop Kennet explains at length what these

blasphemies were,[1] and I will not trouble my readers by retailing them ; I will only say that in a petition dated from the Tower, which is to be found no doubt in the Journals of the House of Peers, Lord Pembroke 'humbly implored pardon of God, the King, and of this House,' and accordingly, after a month spent in durance vile, was released, and 'had leave to come to his place in Parliament.'

It is remarkable that, among the grounds on which the noble earl begged for his release, he pleaded the fact that 'his health was much impaired by long restraint.' Let us see what follows. Such an invalid is he that he has been out of prison only a few days when a complaint is made to the House of Lords by a Mr. Philip Rycaut to the effect that, 'he being to visit a friend in the Strand, whilst he was at the door taking his leave, the Earl of Pembroke came up to the door and with his fist, without any provocation, struck the said Philip Rycaut such a blow upon the eye as almost knocked it out, and afterwards knocked him down, and then fell upon him with such violence that he almost stifled him with his grips in the dirt ; that his lordship then likewise drew his sword and was in danger of killing him, had he not slipped into the house and the door been shut upon him.' The wounded man brings his petition to a close by humbly begging the House 'to be an asylum to him' and give him leave to proceed against the earl according to law. In the end his lordship was bound over in 2,000*l.* to keep the peace towards Mr. Rycaut and the rest of his Majesty's subjects for twelve months.

But unhappily, almost before Mr. Rycaut had been able to invoke the aid of the House of Peers, Lord Pembroke had got into another and far more serious scrape ; for the House of

[1] It is right to add that in consequence of this affair, 'to show their lordships' great sense and abhorrency against blasphemy,' it was ordered that a bill be brought into the House 'for the severe punishment of all blasphemers for the time to come.' Such a bill was brought in, but from some cause or other was allowed to drop. It is almost too good to hope that even in this embryo state it had gained its end.

Lords on March 1 following received a petition from Lord Pembroke himself, complaining that at a coroner's inquest held on the body of Nathaniel Cony, gentleman, he had been charged with causing that person's death—evidently implying that he had received an affront which he ought not to brook as a peer.

Next day a committee of the 'Law Lords' was appointed to consider the question thus raised; but so far were they from taking his lordship's view, that on the 6th it was resolved 'that a commission of oyer and terminer should be issued under the Great Seal for the indictment of Philip, Earl of Pembroke, for killing and slaying Nathaniel Cony.' On the 19th the Lord Chancellor informed the House that the Grand Jury had found him guilty of 'felony and murder,' and a Lord High Steward—Lord Finch, afterwards Earl of Nottingham—having been appointed in due form for the purpose, Lord Pembroke was put upon his trial, just as within the memory of many of us the late Lord Cardigan was tried for the murder of Captain Tuckett.

It is needless here to recount the legal details of the affair; they may be found at full length by those who are curious in such things in the book of 'State Trials.' It is enough to say that the indictment charged the noble Earl with 'feloniously, wilfully, and of malice before-thought, striking, bruising, and kicking, killing and murdering the said Nathaniel Cony, in the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, against the peace of our sovereign lord the King, his crown and dignity.' It appears that without any provocation, while drinking in Long's Tavern, in the Haymarket, Lord Pembroke first insulted and then assaulted Mr. Cony, next knocked him down, and ended by kicking him when prostrate. The poor man died a few days after, in spite of all that the doctors and 'chirurgeons' could do. The trial, happily, was not dragged out to such a length as that of the Tichborne 'Claimant' of our own day at Westminster. The case against Lord Pembroke having been opened by Sir Wm. Dolben, Recorder of London, in his capacity of King's Serjeant-at-Law, the prosecution was conducted by the Attorney-

General, Sir William Jones, and the witnesses having been examined, and the evidence against him having been summed up by Sir Francis Winnington, in a day or two the turbulent and quarrelsome nobleman who had thus tarnished the shield of the Herberts was found guilty of manslaughter; forty of their lordships finding that verdict, while six were for finding him guilty of the higher offence, and eighteen pronounced him 'not guilty.'

It so happened that, although if he had been found guilty of murder the plea of peerage would not have saved him (as witness the cases of Lord Stourton and Lord Ferrers), yet as the law then stood it was competent for a member of the Upper House to plead in arrest of judgment for manslaughter 'the privilege of his peerage;' so he got off scot free, and the Lord High Steward put an end to the farce of the trial by breaking his staff according to ancient custom.

But the danger that he had run on this occasion did not cure Lord Pembroke of his fondness for tavern brawls. In the following November a quarrel over their cups arose between his lordship and the Earl of Dorset; and, as usual, the quarrel seemed likely to end in a duel. The matter being happily brought under the notice of the House of Peers, before any blood had been spilt, their lordships resolved that both of the belligerent parties should be 'confined to their respective houses or lodgings till further orders;' and finally, on a full consideration of the whole affair, it was ordered that the confinement of the Earl of Dorset and that of the Earl of Pembroke should be 'taken off,' and that the latter should have leave given him 'to retire himself to his house at Wilton.' This was not, one would think, a very severe punishment for such a miscreant; and many a man in the humbler ranks of middle life in our own day would be glad to be let off for two serious and one fatal assault by honorary banishment to some pleasant grounds and a park, in Wiltshire or elsewhere. Such an ostracism indeed would be a thing to be envied by most of us, if unaccompanied by a *tâche* or a stain, but scarcely otherwise.

Whether the noble Earl took advantage of the kind permission thus given to him to 'retire himself' from the temptations of 'high life in London,' does not appear. It may, however, be presumed that he took the hint, as we do not hear of him playing such mad pranks again in the parish of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. He died in 1683, when his titles, honours, and estates passed to a younger and far worthier brother, Thomas, who became the eighth earl. He restored the ancient reputation of the family ; for, besides holding several high offices in the State, including that of Lord High Admiral and the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, his distinction in the world of literature and science procured for him the chair of the Royal Society. His name too is worthy of remembrance as the collector of that magnificent gallery of sculptures and other antiquities which has for two centuries given an envied celebrity to the fine old seat of Wilton House, the home and haunt of the English Muses, and renowned alike for its pictures and art treasures, and as the spot where Sidney wrote the greater part of his 'Arcadia.' The titles of Pembroke and Montgomery have since descended in his line, and it may well be hoped that the youthful Earl of Pembroke will do no discredit hereafter to the honoured name of his own lamented father, Sidney Herbert.

And what about the issue of Philip, the seventh Earl? Happily, he left no male descendants to carry on the polluted stream, which for centuries had flowed so purely in the veins of the Herberts. He married one of the loose and frail beauties of the Court of Charles II., Henriette de Querouaille, a sister of the notorious Duchess of Portsmouth. This lady, who survived her husband nearly half a century, left a daughter, who married the second Lord Jeffries, son of the infamous Judge Jeffries, by whom she became the mother of Henriette Louisa, Countess of Pomfret ; but the titles of Jeffries and Pomfret are now extinct.

THE RISE OF THE ROTHSCHILDS

As more than one fair lady of the House of Rothschild has lately married into what I suppose may be styled our Christian aristocracy, a short account of the steps of the ladder by which the Rothschilds in less than a century have climbed from poverty to the highest pinnacle of commercial success may not be without interest at the present moment. The main facts are not new to the world, but the details, I have reason to believe, will be found new by very many, if not most of my readers ; and I will therefore proceed with my story, with only a word of preface—namely, that for most of them I am indebted to my worthy friend Mr. Frederick Martin, the author of the 'Statesman's Year Book,' and of other useful works too numerous to mention.

In the centre of the ancient city of Frankfort-on-the-Main is a narrow lane not unlike Holywell Street, in the Strand, or Maryleport Street, Bristol, but which, a hundred years ago, was not only one of the narrowest, but one of the dirtiest and filthiest in Europe. It was called the 'Judengasse,' or Jews' lane—the name denoting the fact that the Jewish population were forced to live in one part of the town, analogous to the 'Ghetto' at Rome, and to the 'Jewry' of the City of London in the Middle Ages. In that street, in the year 1743, was born Meyer Amschel Rothschild, the founder of that great house which holds in its hands the destinies of European nations more truly than the ephemeral emperors and kings of our day. An empire may fall at Sedan ; a king may abdicate at Madrid ; and the imperial and regal glories pass away as a dream ; but Horace long ago crowned money as a Queen, saying, 'Et genus et formam *regina* Pecunia donat ;' and, looking at the existing state of things around us, we cannot any of us get rid of the idea that, after all, money is the great power which rules the world.

But to return to the Rothschilds. When Meyer Amschel Rothschild first saw the light of day, the Jews, though no longer tied to a single spot in London, were literally in fetters at Frankfort. In 1743 the 'Jews' lane' was a prison, guarded at either end with heavy chains, which were fastened every evening by the watchmen, and also were kept closed on all Sundays, Feast Days, and Holy Days. Out of this pent-up district, only 300 yards long, the wretched inhabitants were not allowed to stir under penalty of death. 'No Jew,' says Mr. Martin, 'was allowed under any pretence to live beyond the limits of the "Judengasse;" a rule which compelled the poor outcasts either to raise their dark sunless dwellings higher and higher with each succeeding generation, or else to hide themselves away in deep cellars underground. Such were the early surroundings that greeted the birth of the world-famed banking dynasty.' Shame on Christians, indeed, that such should have been the case; but it only proves the truth of Byron's sneer:

> Christians have burnt each other, quite persuaded
> That all th' Apostles would have done as they did.

At the age of eleven young Rothschild lost his parents, and had to begin the battle of life single-handed. After a few years' schooling, one fine morning he packed up all his worldly goods on his shoulders, and with a stout stick in his hand walked to Hanover. Here he fortunately found a place as clerk to a small banker and money-changer. By dint of extreme parsimony he managed to save a little out of his salary, and with this capital in hand he returned to Frankfort in the year of grace 1773, a little over a hundred years ago. I wonder if the House of Rothschild remembered to keep in the year 1873 their founder's centenary.

Meyer Amschel now took to himself a wife, and established himself as a broker and money-lender in the Judengasse, joining with his other business a little money-lending on a small scale. As a skilful collector of, and an honest dealer in old coins and other rarities, he soon gained some local fame, and

many a virtuoso would look in upon him at his shop, No. 148, over the door of which he hung out his sign, the 'Red Shield,' which, in allusive heraldry, denoted 'Roth Schild.'

Among the connoisseurs with whom he was thus brought into connection was William, the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, afterwards known as William I., Elector of Hesse. In those troubled and dangerous times, when the first Napoleon was making every town in Europe quake, the Landgrave was no doubt often glad to dispose of stray family jewels for a supply of the needful, and possibly to borrow a few hundreds on personal security in order to pay the more pressing of his creditors. Thus, intimate relations were established between the Landgrave and the once poor clerk of Hanover: and so in 1796, when the French troops marched on Frankfort, the owner of the 'Red Shield' had time to put his 'little all' safe within the sheltering walls of the Landgrave's Schloss at Cassel—a service which the Jew banker was able to return with interest ten years later. The event is worth noticing, as marking the starting-point of the career of the House of Rothschild.

As a rule, bombardments are not very fortunate in their consequences; but the bombardment of Frankfort by Kléber, in 1796, was not without its advantages, to the Jews at least. The 'Ghetto' of that city was knocked nearly to pieces, and the Jews were thenceforth allowed, as a special favour and privilege, to rent houses among their Christian brethren. The 'Red Shield' was transferred to a better part of the city, and its owner was appointed banker to the Landgrave and his court.

This led to an event which proved the turning-point of the fortunes of the Rothschilds. In 1806 the Landgrave was driven from his throne by Napoleon, who wanted the territory in order to consolidate the kingdom of Westphalia, which he had recently conferred on his brother Jerome. In his hurry to 'pack up and be off,' William had no time to secure his cash, which he was only too glad to leave in the hands of his

banker, though probably he had his misgivings as to seeing it again. Safer, however, he thought in the hands of Meyer Amschel, his *Hof-agent*, than in the hands of the merry King of Westphalia. The sum amounted to just a quarter of a million of English pounds. The *Hof-agent*, however, was equal to the crisis ; he saw how to take care of the money, and to make it bring in a good return also ; and at a time when gold was worth from 12 to 20 per cent., and when all who were 'hard up' were forced to mortgage their lands and houses, he saw that it only required a cool head and sound judgment to turn the capital over with advantage. The result was that in six years he had nearly quadrupled the original sum in his hands, and when he died, in 1812, he was found to be worth a million sterling.

Shortly after this event happened the battle of Leipsic, and on the re-establishment of peace the Landgrave was restored to his estates and his petty royalty. He had not been many days at his palace when he received a call from the eldest son of his departed *Hof-agent*, who handed him the quarter of a million which six years before he had left with Meyer Amschel. The Landgrave was overjoyed at the sight of his cash, and, feeling that he could not pay too much honour to such honesty and probity, dubbed young Rothschild a knight on the spot. At the Congress of Vienna, which he attended shortly afterwards, he was loud in his praises of the Rothschilds ; and the result was that the other crowned heads of Europe were anxious to secure the services of so trustworthy a banker, who, no doubt, was equally ready to do for any one of them what he had done for the Landgrave, namely, take care of their money and repay it without interest.

Meyer Amschel Rothschild left ten children—five daughters and five sons—who by their father's will were bidden to enter into partnership, binding themselves under the most solemn promises to be true to each other, and to keep the great Hof Agency business in their own hands, without allowing

strangers to interfere with it. They were to establish different branches of the central bank at Frankfort, in London, Paris, and the other capitals of Europe, and thus to keep each other well informed as to all the centres of politics and business.

'Anselm, the eldest son, was to be the head of the firm, says Mr. Martin, 'directing all its operations, and, if necessary, controlling the actions of his brothers. However, this arrangement was not strictly carried out, for, though Anselm remained all his life the nominal head, yet his third brother (Nathan) inherited the largest share of his father's spirit, and became the real chief of the house.' It was this Nathan Meyer Rothschild, I may here remark, who, eventually settling in London, was naturalised in England, was created a Baron of the Austrian Empire, and became the father of Sir Anthony Rothschild, the first English baronet of the family. I must now pass on to his history.

Born in September 1777, he left his home at Frankfort in 1798, at the age of twenty-one, and opened a small place of business as a banker and money-lender at Manchester, which city he is said to have reached with 84*l.* in his pocket after paying his travelling expenses. By dint of shrewdness, perseverance, and self-denial, however, he had so successfully conducted his operations that he came from Manchester to London with a capital of 200,000*l.* at his command. He engaged largely in speculations in the public funds, a safe step considering the supply of information which he received from abroad; and, as he realised vast profits, his 200,000*l.* speedily added a fresh '0' to it.

The next part of the story I will leave Mr. Martin to tell in his own words:

'An instance of young Rothschild's sound calculation, and which proved an event of the greatest importance in his successful career, was his first transaction with the British Government. In 1810, during the period when the fortunes of the Peninsular War seemed most doubtful, some drafts

of Wellington, amounting in the aggregate to a considerable sum, came over to this country, and there was no money to meet them in the Exchequer. Nathan Rothschild, calculating with habitual shrewdness the chances of England's victory in her great contest against the arms of France, purchased the bills at a considerable discount, and, having made them over to the Government at par, furnished the money for redeeming them. It was a splendid speculation in every respect, and, according to Nathan's own confession, one of the best he ever made. Henceforth, the Ministry entered into frequent and intimate relations with the new Hebrew banker, who fully realised the pecuniary advantages which this connection brought him. Every piece of early news which he obtained brought him the gain of thousands at the Stock Exchange, the manipulation of which he had mastered to an unexampled degree. Soon, however, even the information which the resources of the Government furnished him was deemed insufficient by the enterprising speculator, and he set to originate means of his own for obtaining news far more perfect than those at the service of the Government. For this purpose he organised a staff of active agents, whose duty it was to follow in the wake of the Continental armies, and to send daily, or, if necessary, hourly reports of the most important movements, successes or defeats, in ciphers hidden under the wings of carrier-pigeons. To the breed of these pigeons Nathan Rothschild attended with the greatest care, and often paid large sums for birds of superior strength and swiftness.'

But he was not always content with the news sent at second-hand through pigeons, a mode of transit always liable to be intercepted by a stray shot from a Cockney's or a schoolboy's gun. Occasionally he would make his way to the Continent himself, in order to note matters with his own eyes. For instance, when Napoleon returned from Elba, his anxiety for the pecuniary prospects of the house led him to Belgium, where he followed events, moving in the wake of the army under Wellington. Eager to glean the latest intelligence, he

even ventured on the edge of the battle of Waterloo, where he witnessed the defeat of the French from the high ground in front of the château of Hougoumont.

As soon as the fate of the battle was decided, Nathan Rothschild rode as fast as his horse could carry him to Brussels, where a chaise was in waiting to take him on to Ostend, which he reached at daybreak on June 19. The sea was rough, and he had therefore some little difficulty in getting a boat across; but a brave fisherman agreed to peril his life for the sum of 80*l.*, and the same night he was safe in Dover Harbour. Posting on to London, and sleeping in the chaise, he reached the City early on the 20th, and at ten o'clock was leaning against his accustomed pillar at the Stock Exchange. He looked solemn and anxious; and whispered to some of his acquaintances a rumour that Marshal Blücher and Wellington had suffered a defeat, and that Napoleon was master of the field and of the day.

The news spread like wildfire; down, of course, went the funds. Nathan Rothschild's known agents sold with the rest, but his unknown and secret agents bought still more largely, picking up every bit of scrip that they could lay hands on till the following day. On the afternoon of that day (the 21st) the real news reached London—the news of the fall of Napoleon. Radiant with joy, Nathan Rothschild was the first to inform his friends on the Stock Exchange of the happy event. The funds rose as fast as they had fallen—perhaps even a little faster—and no sooner were the official returns of the battle made known to the world, than it was found that the House of Rothschild had netted a million by the transaction. Enough: the foundations of the monetary dynasty of that house were now secure.

Having thus gained their first couple of millions, the Rothschilds soon found honour and dignities showered thick upon them. The Emperor of Austria raised all the five brothers to the rank of hereditary nobles; and seven years later granted them patents of dignity as barons. And as for

Nathan, his career after Waterloo was as prosperous as it had been before. 'He made money,' says Mr. Martin, 'even by speculations which turned out bad; for instance, by the English loan of twelve millions, for which he became responsible in 1819, and which fell to a discount: but this did not happen until Nathan had relieved himself of all responsibility. His greatest successes, however, were in foreign loans, which he was the first to make popular in England, by introducing the habit of paying in the London market the dividends which previously had been paid abroad, and by fixing the rate in sterling money.'

From about the year 1819 the transactions of the brothers Rothschild came to be spread over the whole civilised world, and Nathan negotiated in person or by proxy loans with the Czar of Russia and with the South American Republics, and drove his bargains with the Pope of Rome and the Sultan of Turkey; yet, while dealing with these world-wide matters, he could calculate to a sixpence what each of his clerk's wages should amount to; and he took care that they should never be overpaid a penny, even when he was himself entertaining at his table peers, bishops, and even Princes of the Blood Royal. And yet he was not happy. His utter want of education rendered him quite unfit to enjoy the pleasures of London society, and at the same time exposed him to the shafts of satire. He was constantly made the subject of caricatures, which nettled and pained him to a degree; and and he was constantly in receipt of *billets-doux*, sent by the post anonymously, which contained threats of assassination unless he sent large sums of money to the writers.

In the year 1831 Nathan Rothschild did a stroke of business which, while it brought him and his house immense profits, also heaped upon them not a little obloquy, freely expressed in many English and foreign newspapers. It is well known that the supply of mercury is exceedingly limited, being almost entirely drawn from two mines, those of Almaden, in Spain, and of Idria, near Adelsberg, in Illyria. The mines

of Almaden, which were known to the Greeks 700 years before Christ, and which furnished 700,000*l.* annually to Rome during the Imperial era, fell somewhat into neglect, on account of the Napoleonic wars at the commencement of the present century, so that the Spanish Government derived less profit from them than formerly. Under these circumstances, when the Ministers of his Catholic Majesty were hard up for funds in 1831, they entertained the application of Nathan to furnish them with a loan, on condition of the Almaden mines being made over to him for a number of years as security. The bargain was struck, and the House of Rothschild entered into possession of the mines, commencing the business by immediately doubling the price of Almaden mercury. The commercial world, much astonished at this step, addressed itself to Idria ; and then it was discovered that the mines of Idria had passed likewise very quietly into the hands of Nathan Rothschild, who had settled, of course, the price of the mercury on the same scale as that of Almaden. By this little transaction the House of Rothschild obtained a complete monopoly in the sale of mercury, and Nathan was able to fix the price of the article, indispensable for many purposes, at his counting-house in St. Swithin's Lane. This clever stroke of business—as profitable as it was clever—had one notable consequence for the sick and suffering of all nations. Mercurial preparations, largely employed in medicine, are at present no more manufactured from the pure metal as obtained from the mines, but from the refuse of other articles containing quicksilver, such as the foil of old mirrors and looking-glasses. It would be interesting, if the statistics were to be obtained, to calculate how many pounds sterling the House of Rothschild made by the little mercury business, and how many persons suffered in consequence of bad mercurial medicines.

The grand secret and guiding principle which has ensured the continuance of the prosperity of the House of Rothschild has been the unity which has attended the co-partnership of its members, so strongly enjoined as a duty on his children by

its founder, Meyer Amschel, as he lay on his death-bed. It is, after all, but a realisation of the truth of the fable of the bundle of sticks, a fresh example of the saying that 'union is strength.' To cement and to continue this bond of union, Nathan conceived the further idea of linking the family still closer together by the intermarriage of the brokers' children. Accordingly in 1836 he summoned a meeting of the family at Frankfort to discuss, and, if possible, to ratify the question. His advice was followed, and the congress broke up with an arrangement for the marriage of the eldest son of Nathan Rothschild with the eldest daughter of his brother Charles.

Nathan had arrived at Frankfort in the May of that year in perfect health and spirits, and he took part in the religious ceremonies which attended the wedding of his son and his niece on June 15. Next day, however, he was taken ill; he grew rapidly worse, and it was suggested that his physician in London, Dr. Travers, should be summoned; but the travelling expenses of a London physician to Germany were too heavy for the purse of a Rothschild, and a cheap medical adviser from the city of Frankfort was called in. Under his hands poor Nathan Rothschild got worse and worse, grew delirious, and talked only of his pounds, his notes, and his thalers, and on the 28th he died.

Early on the morning of the next day a sportsman, looking out for birds on the downs near Brighton, shot a pigeon, which, when picked up, proved to be one of the well-known carriers of the House of Rothschild. It carried no letter under its wings, but only a small bit of paper on which were written the words '*Il est mort*,' with two initials. Who the *il* was there could be no doubt. Next day there was almost a panic on the Stock Exchange, and a great fall in the funds—greater even than that which occurred on the death of Sir Thomas Baring.

The remains of Nathan Rothschild were brought over to England, placed in a sumptuously gilded coffin, and buried with great pomp and state in the Jewish cemetery at the East-end of London, his hearse being followed by a train of mourning

carriages nearly a mile in length, and the cavalcade included not only the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of London, but also the Austrian, Russian, Prussian, and Neapolitan Ambassadors. Verily, if money be not a king, it sometimes has a a royal following.

The fortune left by the head of the family was variously estimated at three, six, and even ten millions. It is probable that the exact sum was never really known, as large sums had been made over to various members of his family in his lifetime. After declaring that he had an interest in all the houses conducted by his brothers on the Continent, he ordered that his four sons should join their uncles in carrying on the transactions—I suppose I must not call it 'business'—of the house, and to each of his three daughters he left a paltry 100,000*l.*, forbidding them to marry without the consent of their mother and brothers. 'This,' as Mr. Martin remarks, 'was but a furtherance of the guiding thought of the latter part of his life, when he dreamed that he was destined to elevate his family into a distinct class or caste, equal to that of the royal families of Europe, and all united in the close ties of blood alliance. Perhaps, at times, he even looked forward to the day when the House of the 'Red Shield' should stand far higher than those of Hapsburg and Coburg, by the right of a power far higher and more stable than that of ancestry—the power of gold.

Such a dream, if Nathan Rothschild ever dreamed it, has not come true, nor does it seem likely ever now to be realised. Another generation has sprung up; the head of the English house is a Peer, and several of the Rothschilds have held seats in Parliament; the Rothschilds now own Gunnersbury Park in Middlesex and Tring Park in Hertfordshire, and Mentmore in Buckinghamshire; and some of their handsome Jewish daughters have exchanged their Israelitish maiden-names for Christian surnames.[1] The caste is broken in upon; the wall

[1] Hannah, sister of Baron Rothschild and of Sir A. Rothschild, married in 1839 the late Right Hon. Henry Fitzroy, M.P. for Lewes, brother of the late Lord Southampton; a daughter of Baron Rothschild,

of severance is no longer standing; and Jewish wealth has now become in the matrimonial market an article of exchange for Christian blood and noble ties. May the blending of the two principles be happy in its results!

AN EPISODE IN THE HOUSE OF HARLEY

Among our great families, whose names are coeval with the Norman Conquest—whose heads in the days of the last Stuart sovereign 'held the realm in pawn'—are the Harleys, who for a century and a half after the extinction of the heroic House of Vere enjoyed the dignity of earls of Oxford, and one of the last of whom figured in his day as a merchant, Alderman, and Lord Mayor of London. The old peerage-makers tell us that the family 'can be traced to a period antecedent to the Conquest,' at which date its position was so eminent that it forked, like the Harcourts, into two rival branches, one on each side of the English Channel, bearing their original name of Harlai in France.

We find that in or about the reign of our Edward II. a certain knight, Sir Robert de Harley, married Margaret, eldest daughter and co-heiress (with her sister Elizabeth, wife of Sir Richard de Cornwall, son of Richard, Earl of Cornwall, King of the Romans, brother of Henry II.) of Sir Bryan de Brampton, in virtue of which marriage he gained the magnificent estate and noble castle of Brampton Bryan, near Ludlow, which has continued down to this day in the hands of his descendants. And Sir Bernard Burke tells us that his grandson, Sir John Harley, of Brampton Bryan, received the honour of knighthood from Edward IV. on the field of battle. From him, eighth or ninth in direct lineal descent, was Sir Robert Harley, of Brampton Bryan, M.P. for Herefordshire, Master of the Mint under Charles I., a man whose name

of Mentmore, has entered the bonds of matrimony after the Christian rite with the Hon. Mr. Yorke, a younger brother of the Earl of Hardwicke; and still more recently another Miss Rothschild has become Countess of Rosebery.

is worthy of remembrance, if for no other reason, because he refused to coin money at the Royal Mint in the Tower with any other die than that of his royal master. For this offence he was deposed by the Parliament, and he does not appear to have lived to see the Restoration. His wife, Lady Brilliana Harley, was a niece of Dorothy, daughter of Sir John Tracy, of Toddington, Gloucestershire, and sister of Mary, wife of Sir Horace Vere, Lord Vere of Tilbury, through which union the Harleys became allied with the Veres, ancient Earls of Oxford, whose name is—or rather was for twenty generations—a synonym for the very flower of English nobility. Lady Brilliana was almost as celebrated for her defence of Brampton Castle, when invested by the Parliamentary forces in 1643, as was Lady Blanche Arundell for her defence of Wardour Castle.[1] Her story is rather a touching one; for although she had held the place for seven weeks against her assailants, she forced them to raise the siege, yet she died a few weeks afterwards, her end being hastened by her annoyance and grief at the siege. After her death the Roundheads returned to their work, and laid siege a second time to the castle, which they took and then burned to the ground. A mass of noble ruins still remains to show what the size of the castle must have been in the days of its splendour.

The son of the owners of Brampton Castle, Sir Edward Harley, was a member of the Parliament that called back Charles II. to his throne, and was appointed Governor of Dunkirk in reward of his father's services and losses in the Royal cause. His eldest son, Robert Harley, successively Speaker of the House of Commons, Secretary of State, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, was created Earl of Oxford and Mortimer in 1711, and four years later was impeached and committed to the Tower. His public trial and his acquittal on the charge of high treason in the reign of George I. are matters well known to every school-boy or school-girl. His son and successor, the second earl, was the gleaner and editor

[1] See above, p. 1.

of the valuable collection of historical documents which is known to scholars as the *Harleian Miscellany*, and which was purchased from his widow for the British Museum. The third earl was his cousin, also Edward, of whom little more need be said than that he married and had four sons, of whom the eldest reigned as a peer in his stead, the second was Bishop of Hereford, and the fourth a prebendary of Worcester, while his third son, Thomas, was sent into the City to make his fortune, or at all events to push his way. The story of this Thomas Harley I now come to tell.

Although the son and the brother of an Earl of Oxford, yet this gentleman shared the fate which is so common among the younger sons even of titled parents, namely, that of having to begin the world with but a very small supply of money. Young Harley was educated at the school at Westminster; but it is not on record that on leaving his father's house at Westminster he walked through Temple Bar and journeyed eastwards into the City of London proper, with only the conventional half-a-crown in his pocket which usually figures on these occasions. Indeed, it is not at all certain that he went through Temple Bar at all, for even at that date there were more ways than one into the heart of London. One way, at all events, was by the river, not in a steamer, but in a hired wherry or his father's private barge.

It so happened that his father's steward, who had made some pickings out of the Harley estates, was possessed of a very pretty daughter, one Anna—or, as she was called, 'Nanny'—Bangham, and she became the fair goddess of his destiny. She was her father's heiress, was known to have a good fortune 'looming in the future,' and her father, plain Edward Bangham, thought that none would have a better right to share it with her than one of his master's sons. The fates were propitious; young Thomas Harley 'popped the question' which has made (or marred) so many men before him and after him. Old Bangham was quite as willing as his fair daughter to say 'yes;' so the affair was soon settled, and her money too. He

received with 'Nanny' a handsome fortune, with which, at the ripe age of twenty-two, the Honourable Thomas Harley commenced business in the wine trade, and became a citizen of London, resolving mentally, no doubt, to sit one day in the civic chair.

Time went on. Harley prospered in his business, and the fact of his having a 'handle' to his name, we may be sure, did not stand in his way among the good people who worship Mammon much, but 'blue blood' even more, to the east of Temple Bar. Ten years after his marriage and his start in business, namely, in 1762, we find him chosen an Alderman of London, and in the same year one of the members for the City, having succeeded to the seat vacated by its late respected representative, Sir John Barnard. He served as Sheriff of London in 1764, and became Lord Mayor in 1768.

During his shrievalty he made himself famous, though not perhaps popular in the City, by seizing the emblems of the 'boot' and 'petticoat,' which the mob were burning in the street opposite the Mansion House, in mockery of Lord Bute and the Princess Dowager, while the Sheriffs were busily engaged, on their parts, in burning the *North Briton*, the paper of John Wilkes. The people in the mob were throwing copies of the paper about in sport and fun, when one of them —probably carrying inside of it a handful of dirt or a stone— was hurled through the front window of Mr. Sheriff Harley's chariot, shattering the glass. This caused an alarm, and the Sheriffs retired, with sound discretion, to the Mansion House. Some few of the ringleaders of the mob were arrested, and brought before the Lord Mayor; but it turned out to be a 'storm in a tea-cup,' and it appeared that no danger to the Constitution was designed or contemplated by the populace, though angry with the civic magnates.

A proposal being made to offer a vote of thanks to the Sheriffs, for discharging their duty on this not very difficult or critical occasion, was negatived by the Lord Mayor himself, who stated publicly that he did not consider the affair as

'sufficiently important for a public and solemn acknowledgment, which,' he declared with emphasis, 'ought to follow only the most eminent exertions of duty.'

For this refusal—it is almost incredible—the Duke of Bedford, in his place in the House of Lords, moved that the Mayor and Corporation of London should be 'ordered to attend at the bar to answer for their conduct;' while another duke, his Grace of Richmond, in seconding the motion, took to himself and his leader great credit for not moving a formal address to his Majesty, urging him to 'deprive the City of its charter.' Lord Mansfield, who had, fortunately, enjoyed a legal instead of a ducal education, with great good sense and coolness, explained the matter in all its bearings to the satisfaction of the House, and in the end prevailed upon the two dukes to withdraw a motion which could not be justified upon any principle of reason, law, or liberty.

For his service on this occasion, however, Mr. Harley was sworn a Privy Councillor, so that he could style himself 'Right Honourable' long before he obtained the honours of the mayoralty.[1] But in proportion as he gained favour at Court, he lost it in the City; and in consequence he was thrown out of Parliament at the next election, and was afterwards unsuccessful in his candidature for Herefordshire, in which county it might be thought the Harley interest would have been all-powerful. At length, in 1775, on the occasion of Mr. Foley being raised to the peerage, when the memory of his shrievalty had passed away, the farmers and cider-makers of Herefordshire thought better of the affair, and sent him as their representative to St. Stephen's; and he continued to hold his seat for a quarter of a century or more.

There is little or nothing to say with respect to Mr. Harley's mayoralty, except that it was uneventful, and that at the close

[1] It is stated by Mr. Sylvanus Urban in the obituary notice of Mr. Harley in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1804, that this honour had never before been conferred on any of his predecessors in the mayoralty from the days of Sir William Walworth.

of it he had won back part at least of that capricious and fleeting substance called public favour.

'It cannot be denied,' observes a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, who was eminently acquainted with the City politics of seventy years ago, 'that in consequence of the peculiar temper of the times, and the imperious duty thence frequently imposed on him of firmly resisting the headstrong course of popular licentiousness, the conduct of Mr. Harley was frequently exposed, as might have been expected, to obloquy and misrepresentation. A strong instance of this was afforded in the case of the press-warrants in 1770 and the following year. As he never wanted popular favour, nor practised those disingenuous artifices by which the fleeting applause of a giddy multitude is too often successfully pursued, it was not in the transient popularity of a day that he sought the reward of his exertions, but in the approbation of his own conscience, and, next to that, in the well-founded and permanent praise of those whose praise he justly valued. *Laudari a laudatis* was ever the object of his ambition. At this distance of time, however, when the ebullitions of popular fury have, together with their effects, long since happily subsided in this kingdom, when the lamentable consequences of uncontrolled democratic frenzy have been so abundantly exemplified in our eyes in the total ruin and desolation of neighbouring States, it will hardly be thought to derogate from Mr. Harley's public character when we state that, in the vigilant discharge of his official duties he was frequently exposed to insult and opposition from a lawless and irritated mob; that, in burning the *North Briton*, while he was Sheriff, in 1764, he was violently and tumultuously assaulted; that, on more than one occasion during his mayoralty he encountered, with a characteristic coolness, and with the most determined intrepidity, very serious personal danger; and that when afterwards, in 1770, he was going up with a number of fellow-citizens to present a loyal address to his Sovereign on the birth of a princess, he was even forcibly torn from his chariot, and prevented from proceeding to St. James's. It is more

pleasant to relate that in later and better times a very different sentiment had universally prevailed in the metropolis; and it is a fact that even his former political opponent, Mr. Wilkes himself, who will probably be as little suspected of partiality in this as of want of discernment in any instance, has frequently been heard to bear honourable testimony, in the latter years of his life, to the merits of Mr. Harley's public conduct, declaring it to have been at all times uniform, manly, and consistent.'

He also continued to draw a good income from his business as a merchant, to which he eventually added that of a banker, and prospered in his double capacity. In conjunction with another gentleman, named Drummond—I believe, his son-in-law—he had at one time a contract for supplying the army in America with foreign gold—a contract out of which the two are said to have realised a fortune of more than half a million. With the proceeds of this contract he bought a fine property at Berrington, near Leominster, on which he built a sumptuous residence, in fact a sort of palace. But, partly owing to the extravagance of his style of living, and partly in consequence of some extensive failures, 'there was in his banking-house in 1797,' says a contemporary writer, 'something like a hesitation of payment.' With respect to this event, 'Sylvanus Urban' says: 'At a period when this critical and even awful state of public affairs had given a shock to public credit, which was felt not only by the most respectable commercial houses throughout the kingdom, but also in some measure by the Bank of England itself, Mr. Harley determined at once to relinquish all his commercial concerns. The most liberal and friendly offers of pecuniary aid he had declined in the most disinterested manner; and having made a voluntary assignment of all his real and personal property (should it be wanting) for the honourable payment of all his partnership demands, he had soon the heartfelt satisfaction of seeing them all discharged in their fullest extent, both as to principal and interest, a proof of his uprightness and integrity which raised

him even higher than before in the estimation of his fellow-citizens.'

Even after this momentary failure, though advanced in years, he was strongly urged to allow himself to be put forward as a candidate for the chamberlainship of the City, when vacant by the death of Mr. Wilkes; but he declined the proposal, in a 'manly and feeling address' to the Livery, in which he stated among other reasons that, in the event of such a vacancy, he was pledged to support the individual who in point of fact was elected to the post. On quitting the representation of the City in 1774, he issued another address to the Liverymen of London, 'strongly marked by that manly steadiness and consistency of character, that clear discernment and vigour of intellect, by which he was at all times distinguished in public and in private life.' Mr. Harley spent the last few years of his life in retirement. He was for some years before his death 'the Father of the City,' and he drew a salary of 300*l.* a year from the civic funds as governor of the Irish Society. His wife died in 1798, and he followed her to the grave in 1804. His biographer, in the columns of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, records the fact that, down to near the end of his life, he continued the vigilant and active discharge of his civic duties in the metropolis, retaining to the time of his death his alderman's gown, and having become by the death of Mr. Alsop, in 1785, the 'Senior or Father of the City.' He left five daughters, his co-heirs—two of whom married peers—but no son to succeed him; and, though the earldom of Oxford is extinct, yet the memory of the ancient and noble House of Harley is still embalmed in the name of Harley Street, so named after the celebrated author of the *Harleian Miscellany*, who is mentioned above as the second earl.

THE BAD LORD STOURTON

The noble House of Stourton is of great antiquity in Wiltshire, deriving its name from the village of Stourton—the town or ville upon the Stour—where its head held broad acres from a date before the Conquest down to the beginning of the Georgian era. That the Stourtons were men of note and of power at that early date is proved by the fact that Botolph de Stourton was one of the chief opponents of the Norman invader in the west, disputing every inch of ground against him, breaking down the sea-walls of the Severn, guarding the land passages, and securing Glastonbury, so that he was able to dictate even to William the Conqueror the terms on which he would yield possession of the soil. From him descended a long line of knights, who fought for the Holy Sepulchre in their generations, and sought their mates among the Bassets, the Vernons, and the Berkeleys. One of this line, Sir John Stourton, a gallant warrior, and also a statesman, in the reign of Henry VI., was raised to the peerage in A.D. 1455, as Lord Stourton. His great-great-grandson, Charles, the seventh baron, however, sadly tarnished the family escutcheon by a deed of murder, which he expiated in the market-place at Salisbury.

This deed of violence took its origin in a strife arising out of those Forest Laws which were so cruel a source of oppression of our poorer classes in the Middle Ages. As Mrs. Crosse writes in *Once a Week*: 'Every schoolboy knows that the tyranny of the early Norman kings was felt most keenly in their cruel exactions for the preservation of game. To kill beasts of the chase was as penal as the murder of a man. We can easily understand how stoutly our ancestors battled for the "Charta de Forestâ," which was extorted with as much reluctance as the Magna Charta itself. Even when the laws

had undergone a considerable amelioration, common persons keeping dogs within the limits of the forest were obliged to cut away the balls of their fore-feet, to render them incapable of pursuing game or of hunting the deer. Great dissatisfaction arose from time to time in respect to the encroachments of the limits of the royal hunting grounds, and bad blood was produced between the great landlords on the one hand and the yeomanry and tenantry on the other.'

In order to see an example of the sad effects of the laws, I will ask my readers to accompany me to the Forest of Selwood, which lies on the borders of Wiltshire and Somerset, in the direction between Salisbury and Bath.

This tract of land, pleasantly diversified by a succession of hills and valleys, must have been very picturesque in the days when as yet it was not cut up by modern 'improvements,' and what is known as 'high farming.' These fair lands, some twelve miles long by five in breadth, were in due course of time 'disafforested,' not, however, without a great deal of opposition from those who were directly interested in keeping them up as a 'chase,' and who preferred the interests of their horses and dogs to those of a prosperous and contented peasantry. But there are two sides to every question; and the whirligig of time brought it about in the course of a couple of centuries—I do not stop here to explain how—that the yeomen and cottagers obtained a prescriptive right to pasture their cattle on the outlying parts of the Forest of Selwood; and of course the lower orders had a personal interest in preserving its glades from encroachment by lords and squires. Again, to quote the words of Mrs. Crosse: 'Towards the close of the reign of Henry VIII. the nobles began to slice off pieces of the outlying wastes and commons, inclosing them for their own pastures and parks. A belief in the rights of the soil is so inherent in human nature that it is not surprising that the people rose and resisted to the very death this encroachment on their privileges. They were first despoiled of their lands by the King, and, now that the forest laws had fallen into

desuetude, they were robbed of their pasturage by the nobles. The evil had attained to such a height that in 1549 a proclamation was issued by Edward VI. to restrain certain nobles and gentry from inclosing the commons and converting them into their own pastures and parks, and commanding that all ground that had been thus inclosed should be thrown open on a certain day, under heavy penalties.' But the good intentions of this order were disregarded by the great landowners; and the result was that the cottagers assembled and raised tumults throughout the district, breaking down the fences which inclosed the parks which Lord Herbert and Lord Stourton had carved out from the lands which, though illegally, they had looked upon as 'waste.' The Crown on more than one occasion sent down a commission to quell these disturbances; but one of these at all events was not destined to pass away without bloodshed.

In the district of which I write is a parish called Kilmington, and in it lived a yeoman family named Hartgill, between whom and Lord Stourton there was evidently 'no love lost.' In fact, both the father and the son had taken active measures to oppose his lordship's arbitrary attempts to inclose the adjacent lands; but Lord Stourton would not yield, and no doubt felt all the more sorely wounded because his opponent was a man of only middle-class birth and parentage. The Hartgills sent up a memorial to the Privy Council, and in the course of a week or two a royal mandate came from London, a scarlet-coated messenger from Whitehall, desiring his lordship to desist from an inclosure he had commenced, and to avoid giving occasion for further 'misliking' among his neighbours.

At this time his lordship, who had married a sister of the Duke of Northumberland, happened to die; but the quarrel between the Stourtons and the Hartgills was not buried in his grave—it was taken up with all possible bitterness by his son and successor, Charles, the seventh lord, the individual already mentioned.

A few years passed on, but apparently the strife between the lord of the great House and the yeoman's family was as lively as ever. At Whitsuntide, 1556, it appears that Lord Stourton came over from Stourton to Kilmington, with the pretended grievance that the Hartgills had been hunting with horses and dogs in his park. With him came a large band of retainers, armed with guns and bows, and evidently bent on mischief. We catch a glimpse of the rough manners of the forefathers of the yeomen of Wilts and Somerset when we read that the Hartgills, on hearing of his lordship's approach, retreated into the parish church of Kilmington for safety. One of the old man's sons, however, John by name, ran back to his father's homestead, in order to fetch some staves, some bows and arrows, and other weapons of offence and defence. As he ran across, several arrows were shot at him by Lord Stourton's men, but these happily missed their aim. Several of the villagers now came up to aid the Hartgills, and actually drove the Stourtonites from the churchyard and its precincts, while the old people with their servants took refuge in the tower of the church, and laid in a supply of bread and meat in order to stand a siege.

One can easily imagine the face of the elder Hartgill as he peered warily out of the church window, and, after thanking his son for the supply of food, bade him go up with all speed to London, to lay the facts of the case before the Queen and her Council at Whitehall.

Scarce was young John Hartgill out of sight, when Lord Stourton and his 'men of war' returned to the churchyard, keeping the old people shut up in the dark belfry of the tower in a pretty state of nervous alarm. One of them, however, went off to the yeoman's defenceless farm-house, and took out of the stables old Hartgill's favourite riding horse, valued at eight pounds, and shot him with a cross-bow, in sight of his owner, giving out that the latter had been seen on it hunting in his lordship's park.

Meantime the son returned from London, having so far

succeeded in his mission that at his request the Lords of the Council sent down a commission, with the High Sheriff of Somerset at its head, ordering Lord Stourton to appear before them. His lordship was, therefore, obliged to swallow his rage, and make a journey to London in custody of the Sheriff. On reaching Whitehall he was committed to the Fleet Prison, to which no doubt he was conveyed by the old 'silent highway' of the river Thames. In all probability, however, as being the brother-in-law of the Duke of Northumberland, he speedily found a means of escape—perhaps by the use of a 'silver key;' for, if I may believe the account of this affair as given by the antiquary Strype, he was soon back at Kilmington, harassing the Hartgills with all the malice of which he was capable.

And so matters stood for a year or two, during which I suppose that the Hartgills came down from their fastness in the church tower, and went about their business as if nothing strange had happened. But it is clear that the Stourtons would not let them remain in quiet. On the accession of Mary, the Hartgills and their fellow-yeomen appear to have presented a fresh petition, asking either for protection from their tyranny, or redress against their violence, for the Council at Whitehall again called the brawlers before them. Lord Stourton now made all sorts of promises of good behaviour, vowing that if any of the Hartgills' cattle or horses had been detained at Stourton House they had only to come and fetch them, and they should have them freely and readily. But they soon learnt not to 'put their trust in princes;' for as they were going to the great house they were attacked by several of his lordship's men, who attacked and wounded John Hartgill, and left him for dead in the road.

This affair had now grown so serious as to have attracted the attention of the Court of the Star Chamber, to whom, we read, 'the matter appeared so heinously base on the Lord Stourton's side that he was fined in a certain sum, to be paid over to the Hartgills.' Besides this, his lordship was a second

time committed as a prisoner to the Fleet. But fines and imprisonments had no weight with him. By hook or by crook he again contrived to effect his escape out of 'durance vile,' this time, however, giving a bond in 2,000*l.* to return when called upon to appear and expressing a wish to settle the quarrel between himself and his old enemies by a money payment, and desiring the Hartgills to fix upon a place where they should receive the fine. Strype tells us that 'the latter received his errand, but were in much doubt to adventure themselves,' and not without good reason, as we shall see presently.

The rest of the story shall be told as condensed from old Strype's quaint and circumstantial narrative: 'At length a meeting was arranged at Kilmington Church, and at ten of the clock one cold January morning Lord Stourton came, true to his appointment. But there came with him such a conclave of men on horseback and men on foot that the Hartgills were in great dread. The open space near the church was nigh filled with this concourse, consisting of fifteen of Lord Stourton's own men, sundry of his tenants, besides several gentlemen and justices, to the number of about sixty persons in all. His lordship went into the church house, which was about forty paces distant, and thence sent word to the Hartgills, who were sheltering themselves under the sacred roof, "that they must come out, for the church was no place to talk of worldly matters;" whereupon they adventured themselves, coming within twenty paces, old Hartgill, after due salutation, saying, "My lord, I see many of mine enemies about your lordship, therefore I am much afraid to come any nearer." Upon this the company said "they durst promise all they had, they should have no bodily hurt." Upon this comfort they approached to my lord's person. Lord Stourton then discoursed upon the reason which had brought them together, saying that if they would come into the church house he would pay them the money. But the Hartgills refused to go into any covered place, the church excepted.

'At this refusal there was much demur and talking, but some one present thought good that a table should be set upon the open green, which was done accordingly. Lord Stourton laid thereupon a cap case and a purse, as though he intended to make payment; and calling unto the two Hartgills, he said that the council had ordered him to pay them a certain sum of money, which they should have every penny; "but marry, he would first know them to be true men." This was the watchword, which was no sooner said than Lord Stourton laid hands on William Hartgill, adding, "I arrest you of felony." Immediately ten or twelve of his own men surrounded the Hartgills and thrust them violently into the church house. Here his lordship produced "two bands of inkle," which he had in readiness, and he caused his men to bind them with the same. He took from them their purses with his own hands, and finding afterwards a turquoise in one, gave it to Lady Stourton. When John Hartgill was bound he gave him a blow on his face, Sir James FitzJames and Chaffin looking on. At this moment young Hartgill's wife, no doubt alarmed at the commotion, rushed into the church house, encountering Lord Stourton at the door. He spurred and kicked at her, making a great rent in her hosen with his spur, and finally gave her such a blow with his sword between the head and neck that she fell backwards as though dead, and for three hours the company had much ado to keep life in her.' Such is the extraordinary account of the illegal arrest of two unoffending gentlemen, made in the presence of so many persons that one is surprised that a feeling of common humanity did not come to rescue the oppressed.

But the worst part of the story remains to be told. Lord Stourton, having kept the Hartgills all day without food or drink, conveyed them bound as his prisoners to a house on his estate, called Bonhams, where he sent for two 'justices of the peace' to examine them!—on what ground or charge is not stated. The so-called 'justices' were probably creatures of his own, for we find that their examination ended in nothing

but an order that they should be 'losed of their bonds.' The same night the prisoners were fetched away by some of Lord Stourton's minions, who, as it subsequently appeared in evidence, had orders to despatch them if they made any resistance. Their destination was now a 'close yard,' adjoining the great house, where they were made to kneel down with their hands tied behind them, and were beaten till they were thought to be dead, 'my lord in the mean season standing at the gallery door, which was not a coyt's (quoit's) cast from the place.' When the ruffians had done the job thus far, they wrapped up the bodies in their own gowns and carried them through a garden into the gallery, where they were joined by Lord Stourton himself, who carried a candle to show them the way, and who, when one of the dying men showed by a groan that life was not quite extinct, ordered his servant to cut their throats, 'lest a French priest, who lay near, should hear them.' The bodies were then cast into an underground chamber, or dungeon, his lordship standing by with the candle in his hand.

One of the assassins, apparently with a softer heart than his fellow, said, 'Oh, my lord, this is a pitiful sight. Had I thought what I now think before the thing was done, your whole land would not have won me to such an act.' To this his wicked employer answered, 'What, faint-hearted fool! is it any more than ridding the world of two knaves, that living were troublesome to God's law and man's? There is no more account to be made of them than the killing of two sheep!' And so they finished their hideous work of death by digging a grave for their victims, covering them first with earth and then with paving stones, while Lord Stourton kept walking up and down on the planks above, oftentimes calling to them to make speed, for that the night went away.' But, though the night passed away and morning came, the hand of justice at length did not fail to overtake the wicked lord, who was arrested and carried to London to be judged for his foul crime. In January, 1556, he was committed to the Tower to await his trial, which took place on February 26 following, before the

judges of the Council in Westminster Hall. It appears he entertained a hope that, being an adherent, nominally at least, of 'the old religion,' he would not be allowed by the Queen to suffer the extreme penalty of the law. But in this hope he was grievously mistaken. 'The Queen and her Council,' observes a writer of repute, 'were greatly displeased at this, and willed process and judgment to proceed against him.'

When called upon to make answer to the charge of wilful murder, he refused to plead, and would not open his mouth until he was threatened with being pressed to death if he remained silent. At last he pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to be hanged; four of his men also were sentenced to be hanged at the same time.

It may readily be supposed that these four poor wretches were turned off at St. Giles's Pound or at Tyburn tree; but the end of Lord Stourton himself was to be witnessed by the men of his own county. He was accordingly conveyed by easy stages by way of Hounslow, Staines, and Basingstoke to Salisbury, where he was executed on March 6. The only favour shown to him was the permission that, in virtue of his rank, he should be throttled by a silken instead of a hempen cord. The market-place was the scene of his execution; and it is some comfort to learn that 'he made great lamentation at his death for his wilful and impious deeds.'

The memory of such a miscreant might well be allowed to pass away, and when he was buried in Salisbury Cathedral it would perhaps have been kinder to have erected no monument to mark the spot where he was laid. But in the north transept there is a tomb which is known as that of 'the wicked Lord Stourton' by exhibiting the armorial bearings of the family in the shape of six circular openings, which represent the six springs which rose, and perhaps still rise, in the park at Stourton. The silken cord with which he suffered was suspended over his tomb for many years, till it rotted away and fell to pieces.

It is scarcely a matter of wonder that the Stourton family

should have long since sold their Wiltshire estates, and emigrated to Yorkshire, where their name is held deservedly in honour to the present day. Their head is now Lord Mowbray, as well as Lord Stourton.

BENJAMIN, LORD BLOOMFIELD

Very many, if not most, of the members of our Peerage, both English and Irish, can boast with truth that they represent families of ancestral wealth and influence, or of historic note, or of brilliant achievements ; and this is true to a far greater extent of the Peerage of Scotland, on the roll of which not a name appears that has not been adorned with a coronet for at least the best part of two centuries, while nearly all the pedigrees can be certified by the 'Lyon' King of Arms at Edinburgh to extend back into the ages when the Stuarts had not yet added an English to their Scottish throne.

A few of the Irish families, however, have attained the honours of the Peerage without any very great public services on the part of the first grantee, and without being able to boast of great wealth or noble ancestry. 'My lord,' said a wealthy squire and M.P., who lived in St. James's Place, to Lord Bute, or Lord Shelburne, or to some other Prime Minister of the last century, 'I am very much inclined to support your measures in my place in Parliament, and to give you my vote and steady support ; but I should be most glad and most obliged to you if, in return, you would go so far out of your way as to ask for me the permission of the Ranger (one of the royal dukes) to allow me the privilege of a private key which will admit me from my garden in St. James's Place into the Green Park without going round by way of the Palace.' 'I am sorry, sir,' replied the Premier, with a benevolent smile, 'that it is not in my power to oblige you in the precise manner in which you wish. The thing, I assure you, is an impossibility ; and his Royal Highness has not only

refused it to more than one applicant, but has desired me never to ask such a favour again. I will, however, with pleasure recommend you to his Majesty for an Irish peerage, if you feel inclined to accept the honour.'

I do not know for certain whether the proffered Irish coronet was accepted by Mr. —— with the same readiness with which it was offered ; but the story —which, by the way, is told with some variation by that old gossip, Sir Nathaniel Wraxall—may serve to show that Irish Peerages were not held of very great account in London even in the good old days 'when George the Third was King,' and when the Legislative Union of 1800 had not been dreamed of as yet by the younger Pitt.

I am led into these remarks by way of introduction to the story of the rise and advancement of one plain Captain Benjamin Bloomfield, of the Royal Artillery, to the dignity of 'Lord Bloomfield, of Redwood, in the county of Tipperary, in the peerage of Ireland.' It appears that the bestowal of this title was due in a very great measure to the concurrence of two or three fortunate accidents.

It so happened that a plain untitled gentleman, 'descended from an ancient family in Ireland,' according to Sir Bernard Burke—albeit he omits all mention of his pedigree, 'Ulster King of Arms' though he is—some sixty years ago held a commission in the Royal Artillery ; and secondly, that he was at Brighton with his troop, when the Prince Regent had taken up his residence at the Pavilion, which he had recently built as a palace of pleasure. A third piece of gratuitous good fortune was to be found in the fact that the Captain was well known in Brighton as an accomplished player on the violoncello ; and further, by way of a fourth bit of luck, his Royal Highness, in his idle and leisure hours, wanted some one who could accompany him on that instrument. Accordingly one day a message was sent to the barracks, requesting, or rather commanding, the presence of Captain Bloomfield at the Pavilion. The summons was loyally and

dutifully obeyed; Captain Bloomfield put in an appearance before 'the first gentleman in Europe;' and so far were his musical talents brought to the right market, that from that evening commenced an acquaintance between the Prince and the Captain which gradually ripened into an intimate friendship, and, as Captain Bloomfield had good manners, good sense, and more tact than falls to most men, lasted while the Prince was king.

For a considerable time the Captain was known in fashionable circles as Sir Benjamin Bloomfield, being appointed an Equerry and Gentleman Usher of the Court, and knighted by the Prince in 1815. Two years later, on the retirement of Sir John M'Mahon, he was appointed to the not very laborious offices of Receiver-General of the Duchy of Cornwall, and Private Secretary to the Prince and Keeper of the Privy Purse.

But he had not yet reached to the summit of the mountain up which his musical talents had led him by an easy ascent. In 1824, as we are told by the Peerages, he was accredited Minister Plenipotentiary and Ambassador Extraordinary to the Court of Stockholm, and shortly afterwards was raised to the Irish Peerage as Lord Bloomfield.

Captain Gronow, in his amusing and entertaining 'Anecdotes and Reminiscences,' lets us into a little of the secret history of these last two steps of preferment. He says: 'A Court intrigue, headed by a fashionable and fascinating marchioness, caused Sir Benjamin Bloomfield to be sent into splendid exile, this lady attributing to him the fact that she had been compelled to send back to the donor some jewels which had been presented to her by the Prince Regent, but which, as it was afterwards discovered, could not be alienated from the Crown, to which they, in fact, belonged.' This well-timed service to Royalty, then, was the true reason why Sir Benjamin was sent off as ambassador to Stockholm and eventually created a peer; and such is the real story of the origin of the title.

It is only right to add that, although he had received not a diplomatic but only an ordinary education, Lord Bloomfield's good sense, polished tastes, affable manners, and unostentatious hospitality rendered him exceedingly popular in that northern capital, and that in his 'splendid exile' he became as great a favourite with Bernadotte as he had been with the Prince Regent at Windsor, at Brighton, or at Carlton House. The name of Lord Bloomfield (adds Captain Gronow in 1860) is held in great respect even to the present day in Sweden. Eventually he was nominated a Knight Grand Cross of both the Royal Hanoverian Guelphic Order and also of the Bath, and promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general in the army and colonel-commandant in the Royal Engineers.

Lord Bloomfield died in the year 1846, at the age of eighty-four, having been twice married. His only son, his issue by his second wife, was the second Lord Bloomfield, who, having followed the diplomatic profession, and having held for many years the post of Minister at the Court of Berlin, was rewarded with an English peerage and the dignity of a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath; but both the titles died with him. Still, however, it may fairly be asserted, I take it, that, in all human probability, these twin coronets would never have been called into existence if it had not been for the occurrence of the chapter of accidents already referred to; and if any moral is to be drawn from the story of Benjamin, Lord Bloomfield, it would seem to be that it is occasionally a profitable investment to give our sons, as well as our daughters, a musical education.

LORD LYTTELTON'S GHOST

Among the many well-authenticated tales of supernatural events—or at any rate of events that cannot be explained by any merely natural laws—is one which for over a century has been current in the noble house of Lyttleton, being handed

down with great minuteness 'from sire to son,' and referred to by Sir Walter Scott, Boswell, and Hugh Miller, as well as by other writers. It relates to the sudden end of Thomas, second Lord Lyttelton, which happened at a house at Epsom in Surrey—then a fashionable watering-place—on November 27, 1779, when his lordship was only six-and-thirty years of age. The story is briefly but incidentally told by Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall, in his amusing and interesting 'Memoirs of his own Time,' and in a way which makes it clear that he, at all events, inclined to the belief that it was the result of some power more than human, though at the same time he hesitates to express his faith on the subject in clear and unmistakable terms. I, like him, shall content myself with simply telling the tale, leaving to my readers the task of accounting for the occurrence in any way that they may think fit. So far as Lord Lyttelton's personal character stood, his secession from the supporters of Lord North, if we may judge from Nathaniel's words, appears to have been a diminution of strength and a loss of talent in the House of Peers which that unpopular Ministry could ill afford. If so, it is obvious to remark that a century ago high moral qualities were not so necessary as they are nowadays to secure influence to men in public situations.

The Lytteltons have held a foremost place among the untitled squirearchy of Worcestershire for at least 600 years, since the reign of Henry III. With only a single break, when the family hopes centred in an heiress—who induced her husband, however, to take her own name along with her broad acres—the line of male descent is made out clearly by the Heralds' College from Thomas de Littleton or Lyttleton of Henry's reign, who married the heiress of Simon de Frankley, down to the present Lord Lyttelton, whom Burke styles Baron Lyttelton of Frankley, and who has lately succeeded to the Viscountcy of Cobham.

The Lytteltons gallantly supported the royal cause in the days of the Stuarts, both in purse and in person; and one of

the squires of Frankley was within the walls of Colchester Castle when it was besieged by the Roundheads of the Parliamentary army. This gentleman's grandson, Sir George Lyttelton—who had been successively M.P. for Okehampton, secretary to George, Prince of Wales, and a Commissioner of the Treasury, and afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer—was raised to the honours of the Peerage in 1757. He is known both as an historian and a poet, and he commanded no less respect on account of his personal character and those domestic virtues which were rarer among great personages under George II. than under Victoria. His son, too, Thomas, the second lord, was a man of high political abilities, and one who, in spite of private vices of a most glaring character, might easily have occupied a high place in the then position of parties, if he had not been so suddenly cut off before attaining, or, at all events, passing the prime of life. So, at any rate, thought Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, who knew many of his friends personally, and who seldom formed an absurd estimate of other men's position in the age of which he writes so amusingly. And yet he confesses that by the profligacy of his conduct and the abuse of his high talents[1] he seemed to have emulated the Duke of Buckingham in Dryden or Pope's Duke of Wharton, both of whom he resembled alike in the superiority of his natural endowments and in the peculiarity of his end. Villiers, Duke of Buckingham—the 'Zimri' of Dryden's 'Absalom and Achitophel'—after exhausting his health and squandering his immense fortune in every species of excess and riot, expired, as we all know, in a way-side inn, a wretched tenement, hard by his own estate in Yorkshire, abandoned by all his former admirers and boon companions. The Duke of Wharton, who had played under George I. a part not much less eccentric than that played by Villiers under the second Charles, ended his wild and mad career, exiled and attainted,

[1] So great, indeed, were his abilities as a statesman and a writer, that he has been accused, both in the *Quarterly Review* and elsewhere, of having been the author of the 'Letters of Junius.'

in an obscure monastery of Catalonia, worn out, as we shall presently see, by his desperate efforts in pursuit of pleasure.

In the straggling town of Epsom, which at that time was one of the chief haunts of the gay world, not annually in a single race-week, but during half the year, there stands a country house known as Pit Place, being so named, not after the 'Great Commoner,' as many persons suppose, but for the less poetical reason of having been built in one of those chalk pits which abound on the edge of the Surrey Downs. The house still bears its old name, as it did a century ago ; and it is occupied by a private family, by whom I was kindly and courteously allowed, last year, to see the bedroom which was the scene of the events I am about to relate. It is a plain unpretending mansion, with pleasant lawns and gardens, and reminds one of a country rectory. Towards the close of November, 1779, Lord Lyttelton had gone down from London to Pit Place for the purpose of spending a week or two in field sports or other recreations, and he had taken with him a gay party of friends. On the 24th of that month he had retired to bed at midnight, after spending the evening in playing at cards with his guests, when his attention was attracted by the fluttering of a bird,[1] apparently a dove or a pigeon, tapping at the window of his bedchamber. He started, for he had only just put out his light and was about to compose himself to rest, and sat up in bed to listen. He had gazed and listened for a minute or so, when he saw, or at all events fancied that he saw, a female figure clothed in white enter—

[1] In an interesting paper on 'Old Superstitions,' Cuthbert Bede, in the *Illustrated London Magazine* for 1855, refers to this story, and remarks: 'There is a superstition which has gained credit in country parishes that a person about to die is often forewarned of his or her dissolution by the appearance of a dove or a pigeon; and this belief has been entertained by other than mere rustic minds. Lord Lyttelton's is a well-known instance. . . . . And springing from a similar belief was the Duchess of Kendal's fancy that George I. flew in at her window in the shape of a raven.' To this he adds a touching story of a little child in a Kentish village, where the flight of a dove into the window of a schoolroom was recognised by a little child as the herald of her own death, which happened three weeks afterwards.

whether by the door or by the window we are not informed—and quietly approach the foot of his bed. He was somewhat surprised, and not agreeably surprised, when the figure opened its pale lips and told him that in three days from that very hour he should cease to live.

In whatever manner this intimation, real or unreal, from the other world was conveyed to him, whether by sound of the voice or by any other mode of communication, one thing is certain, that Lord Lyttelton regarded it as a reality and a message from the world of spirits. Next morning he mentioned it as such to the guests who were in the house ; and during the next two or three days it preyed upon his mind, visibly affected his spirits, and threw a damp over the entire party who were assembled.

The third night came, and everything went on as usual. The guests had sat down to dinner, played their rubbers at whist, and retired ; but none of them had dared to rally the young Lord Lyttelton on the depression of spirits under which he laboured. Eleven o'clock came ; the party broke up and went to their several rooms, wishing each other good night, and heartily desiring that the night were past and gone, so restless, anxious, and uncomfortable did they feel without exception. Twelve o'clock came ; and Lord Lyttelton was sitting up in bed, having given his servant orders to mix him a dose of rhubarb, though apparently in the best of health. The dose was poured out, and he was just about to take it, when he found that there was no teaspoon. A little out of patience with his valet for neglecting to have a spoon at hand, he ordered him to go and fetch one from the pantry at the foot of the stairs. The man was not absent from the room for more than a minute, or possibly a minute and a half ; but when he returned he found his master lying back at full length upon the bed, speechless and motionless. No efforts to restore animation were of any avail, and no symptom of consciousness showed itself. His lordship was dead, having died on the third day, as the spectre had foretold.

As the records of the Surrey coroner a century ago are no longer extant, it is hopeless at this distance of time to attempt to find out whether a formal inquest was held upon the body, and, if so, what the verdict may have been. Whether, therefore, Lord Lyttelton's death was occasioned by any sudden shock to his nervous system, or whether it was the result of a sudden apoplectic or other seizure, must remain a matter of uncertainty and conjecture to the end of time.

Sir Nathaniel Wraxall adds a reflection of his own to the effect that the Lyttelton family in the last century suffered from a certain constitutional irritability of the nerves, which appears to have predisposed its members to such shocks as that which produced, or at all events hastened on, the end of the young nobleman here related. This may or may not have been the case; but it is only fair to state that Sir Nathaniel adds, in his own gossiping way, by way of confirmation of his theory, that the first lord, in spite of his great practical sense and political experience, 'manifested great credulity on the subject of apparitions;' and that a female cousin of the deceased some four years afterwards died in a somewhat similar way at Stourhead, Wiltshire, about two years after her marriage to Sir Richard Hoare, Bart., of that place. The fact, however, is that Lord Lyttelton's life had been of so licentious and abandoned a character as to subject him continually to the keenest reproaches of an accusing conscience; '*Nocte dieque suum gestare in pectore testem.*' This domestic spectre —for such it must ever be to a man of a sensitive mind— which accompanied him everywhere, was known to have given rise while he was on his travels, and particularly at Lyons, says Sir Nathaniel, to scenes greatly resembling the scene of his last moments at Epsom.

It is clear that the good-natured old chronicler on whom I have drawn so largely for the materials of this sketch did not speedily dismiss the subject from his memory. About five years afterwards, when dining at Pit Place, he had the curi-

osity to search out and visit the bedchamber which was the scene of Lord Lyttelton's tragic end. He was shown the bedstead on which he died, and the casement of the window at which the bird had tapped with its beak so maliciously, and against which it had fluttered with its wings. Moreover, he was a constant visitor at the house of his lordship's stepmother, the Dowager Lady Lyttelton, in Portugal Street, Grosvenor Square, who often talked to him on the subject, inclining to the supernatural, as he did to the natural, view of the case. 'A woman of a very lively imagination, she gave an implicit faith,' he says, 'to all the supernatural occurrences which were supposed to have accompanied, or rather to have immediately preceded, Lord Lyttelton's end;' and it is well known that she immortalised the event by executing a painting of it, which is still in existence, and is preserved in the family as a memorial of the past. She was gifted with the painter's art, and she executed the painting in 1780, when the affair was fresh in the memory of her friends and of the servant who attended him at Pit Place, from whom she drew her information. Every detail was given as told to her by the valet, who had it from his master's lips during that three days' interval between the warning and the fatal stroke. 'This picture,' adds Sir Nathaniel, 'used to hang in a conspicuous place in her drawing-room in Portugal Street, and must be well remembered, there or elsewhere, by many friends of the family. It is not perhaps of any high value as a work of art, and its intrinsic value may be small, but it is a precious heirloom in the House of Lyttelton. In it the bird at the window is represented as a dove; and the female figure habited in white is standing at the foot of the bed, announcing to Lord Lyttelton his speedy dissolution.' It is only right to add here that the picture thus described is not known to the present members of the Lyttelton family; and, though there is somewhere or other to be seen a small print of the version, the print is poor and intrinsically worthless.

Lord Lyttelton, in spite of his wickedness, 'honoured the

memory of his mother with a Monody' which has become classical, and which was unfeelingly parodied by Smollett. Lord Lyttelton's death, as here recorded, not only deprived the existing Ministers of a former supporter, but caused the extinction of the peerage, as he was his father's only son, and his own marriage had brought him no issue. The family baronetcy, however, reverted to his uncle, William Lyttelton, some time British Minister at Lisbon, who had been created an Irish peer by the title of Lord Westcote, and in 1794 obtained in his own favour a fresh peerage patent as Lord Lyttelton in the Peerage of Great Britain. It is his descendant who now enjoys the title and estates as head and representative of the Lytteltons of Worcestershire.

It remains only now to add one or two versions of the story, either as a whole or in part, from original papers which were kindly placed at my disposal by the late Lord Lyttelton himself.

The first of these papers is a memorandum in the handwriting of William Henry, the first Lord Lyttelton of the new creation, which is indorsed in his lordship's handwriting: 'Remarkable Dream and Circumstances attending the Death of Thomas Lord Lyttelton.'

'On Thursday, the 25th of November, 1779, Thomas Lord Lyttelton, when he came to breakfast, declared to Mrs. Flood, wife of Frederick Flood, Esq., of the kingdom of Ireland, and to the three Misses Amphlett, who were lodged in his house in Hill Street, London (where he then also was), that he had had an extraordinary dream before: he said he thought he was in a room into which flew a bird, which appearance was suddenly changed into that of a woman dressed in white, who bade him prepare to die; to which he answered, "I hope not soon, not in two months." She replied, "Yes, in three days." He said he did not much regard it, because he could in some measure account for it; for that a few days before he had been with Mrs. Lawson, when a robin redbreast flew into her room. When he had dressed himself that day to go to the

House of Lords, he said he thought he did not look as if he was likely to die. In the evening of the following day, being Friday, he told the eldest Miss Amphlett that she looked melancholy; "but," said he, "you are foolish and fearful. I have lived two days, and, God willing, I will live out the third." On the morning of Saturday he told the same ladies that he was very well, and believed he should "bilk the ghost." Some hours afterwards he went with them, Mr. Fortescue, and Captain Wolseley to Pit Place, at Epsom; withdrew to his bedchamber soon after eleven o'clock at night, talked cheerful to his servant and particularly inquired of him what care had been taken to provide good roles (*sic*) for his breakfast next morning. He stepped into bed with his waistcoat on, and, as his servant was pulling it off, he put his hand to his side, sunk back, and immediately expired without a groan. He ate a good dinner after his arrival at Pit Place that day, and took an egg for his supper. It (he?) did not seem to be at all out of order, except that while he was eating his soup at dinner he had a rising in his throat—a thing which had often happened to him before, and which obliged him to spit some of it out. His physician, Dr. Fothergill, told me that Lord Lyttelton in the summer preceding had a bad pain in his side, and he judged that some great vessel in the part where he felt pain gave way, and to that he conjectured his death was owing. His declaration of his dream, and his expressions above mentioned consequent thereunto, were upon a close inquiry asserted to me to have been so by Mrs. Flood, the eldest Miss Amphlett, Captain Wolseley, and his *valet de chambre* Faulkner, who dressed him on the Thursday; and the manner of his death was related to me by William Stuckey, in the presence of Mr. Fortescue and Captain Wolseley—Stuckey being the servant who attended him in his bedchamber, and in whose arms he died.'

This narrative is signed 'Wescote'—an Irish title which the writer bore before being raised to the English barony of Lyttelton.

The following is the narrative of the same event in the handwriting of the late Sir Digby Neave :

'Thomas Lord Lyttelton died in 1779, at his residence at Pit Place, Epsom. In 1828 Mr. Taylor, of Worcester Park, near Ewell, Surrey, who was then about eighty years of age, told me—then residing at Pit Place—that he was in the neighbourhood during the year 1779, and heard the particulars of the illness and death of Lord Lyttelton from an Italian painter visiting at Pit Place at the time of Lord Lyttelton's death. Lord Lyttelton had come to Pit Place in a very precarious state, and was ordered not to take any but the gentlest exercise. As he was walking in the conservatory with Lady Affleck and two Misses Affleck a robin perched on an orange tree close to them. Lord Lyttelton attempted to catch it, but failing, and being laughed at by the ladies, he said he would catch it even if it was the death of him. He succeeded, but he put himself in a great heat by the exertion. He gave the bird to Lady Affleck, who walked about with it in her hand. Lord Lyttelton became so ill and feverish that he went off to London for advice to a house in Bruton Street. In his delirium he imagined that a lady with a bird in her hand, drawing his curtains aside, told him that he would die. Dreams being the sequels of waking thoughts, it needed no ghost to fix such an impression on the mind of a sick man ; and this may be said to clear away supernatural agency thus far. As to his death occurring at the moment indicated by an apparition, and the putting on the clock by his friends, for the habits of his boon companions in the house at the time, and the report of the Italian painter, his informant (Mr. Taylor) was satisfied as to its being a fable, invented to mystify the public, as the actual circumstances attending his death were as follows : Being ill in bed opposite a chimney-piece with a mirror over it, he desired a valet to give him some medicine which was on the chimney-piece. Seeing him mixing it with a tooth-brush, Lord Lyttelton raised himself up in bed and rated him ; but was so weak that his head sank

below the pillow on to his chest, and he gasped for breath. Instead of relieving him, the valet in his fright left the room, and death ensued before assistance could be given. Mr. Taylor, of Worcester Park, told me the names of the parties in the house at the time ; but I recollect only that Michael Angelo Taylor, M.P., was one of them. He named to me also that Lord Lyttelton had become possessed of Pit Place in payment of a debt of honour.'

Another narrative of the same circumstances is signed 'S. L.'—no doubt denoting the handwriting of Sarah, Dowager Lady Lyttelton. It runs as follows :

'Mr. George Fortescue one day called upon me in town, and in a conversation—the subject of an article in the *Quarterly*, which ascribed the authorship of "Junius" to Thomas Lord Lyttelton—he told me he had often heard from his father, Lord Fortescue,[1] some details of the death of Thomas Lord Lyttelton, which must be true and certainly are rather curious. He said that Lord (then Mr.) Fortescue was in London on the morning of a day in November, 1779, and went to see Lord Lyttelton—his first cousin—who was then also in town, and who on the day before had made a fine speech in the House of Lords. He found Lord Lyttelton in bed, though not ill ; and on his rallying him for it, Lord Lyttelton said, "Well, cousin, if you will wait in the next room a little while, I will get up and go out with you." He did so, and the two young men walked out into the streets. In the course of their walk they crossed the churchyard of St. James's, Piccadilly. Lord Lyttelton, pointing to the grave-stones, said, "Now look at all these vulgar fellows ; they die in their youth at five and thirty ; but you and I, who are gentlemen, shall live to a good old age." The walk ended by their getting into a carriage and driving together to Lord Lyttelton's house at Epsom, where there was a party of his friends. They dined and chatted cheerfully, and no allusion was made to any

[1] Hugh, first Earl Fortescue, K.G. He died in 1842.

remarkable occurrence. In the evening Lord Lyttelton withdrew to his room earlier than Mr. Fortescue, who, so far from having any anxiety or curiosity upon his mind respecting his cousin, sat up before the fire in his drawing-room, with his feet on the fender, and quietly dropped asleep. He was roused, however, by Lord Lyttelton's servant rushing into the room and saying, "Help, help! my lord is dying!" He ran upstairs and found that all was over. His servant said that his lordship had got into bed, and asked for his usual medicine—a dose of rhubarb—but that, finding it ill-mixed, he desired the servant to mix it again. No spoon being at hand, the man began to mix it with a toothpick that lay on the table. "You dirty fellow!" said Lord Lyttelton, "go down and fetch a spoon." He obeyed, and on returning to the room, found his master speechless, fallen back on the pillow, and in his last agonies. Mr. Fortescue heard nothing either then or for some days after about the dream or the ghost, or the prediction of his death, which Mr. Fortescue, therefore, seemed inclined wholly to disbelieve.'

Mr. R. Plumer Ward, in his 'Illustrations of Human Life' (vol. i., p. 165), treats at considerable length of this strange occurrence. Giving to a friend an account of Lord Lyttelton's appearance to Mr. Miles Peter Andrews, formerly M.P. for Bewdley, in Worcestershire, he writes :

'I have often heard and read much about Lord Lyttelton's seeing a ghost before his death, and also of himself appearing as a ghost to Mr. Andrews ; and so one evening, while sitting next to that gentleman during a pause in the debates of the House of Commons, I ventured to ask him what truth there was in the story so confidently related. Mr. Andrews, as perhaps I ought to have expected, did not much like the conversation ; he looked quite grave and uneasy, and I asked his pardon for my impertinent curiosity. Upon this he said, very good-naturedly, "It is not a subject that I am fond of, especially in such a place as this ; but if you will come and dine with me I will tell you what of it is true and what false." I

gladly accepted the proposal ; and I think that my recollection is perfect as to the following narrative.

'In his youth Mr. Andrews was the boon companion, not to say fellow rake, of Lord Lyttelton, who, as is well known, was a man distinguished at once for his abilities and for a profligacy of morals which few could equal. With all this he was remarkable for what may be called unusual cowardice in one so determinately wicked. He never really repented, and yet he never could quite stifle his conscience. He never would allow, yet he never could deny, a world to come ; and he contemplated with unceasing terror what would probably be his own state in such a world, if there was one. He was always either melancholy with fear or else mad with defiance ; and probably his principal misery here lay in the fact that, with all his endeavours, he never could extinguish the dread of an hereafter. He came down to breakfast pale with the agony he suffered in a dream which at first he would not reveal. It turned out that he thought that for his sins he was enclosed in a globe of iron, of the dimension of the earth, and heated red-hot. At that time all the world was execrating Mrs. Brownrigg, who was hanged for whipping to death one of her apprentices, a little girl. Lord Lyttelton had the greatest hatred and horror of her name ; and to aggravate his punishment, he thought that this wretch was shut up with himself in the globe of hot iron. An imagination so strong could not but be active, inquiring, and restless ; and all this, added to his fears, made him harp incessantly on the question of a future life. He used often to discuss this point with his friend Andrews, to whom he at last said, "Well, if I die first, and am allowed, I will come and inform you." This was but a little before his death. That death was attended with so many mysterious reports of ghosts, warnings, and prophecies, and most of them such entire inventions, that I shall not trouble the company with them, but hasten on to Mr. Andrews's part of the story. "But," asked one of the ladies, "when you say most of them, do you mean that any one of them was well

founded?" I can only tell you what I learned from Mr. Andrews, who, I feel sure, is good authority. It *is* true that the night before Lord Lyttelton died a fluttering of a bird was heard, and perhaps a bird was seen on his window curtains. It is *not* true that Mrs. Humphreys, or any other departed lady whom he had seduced, appeared to him and warned him of his end. It *is* true that he himself thought that he was to die at a given hour, and that the clock was put on in order to deceive him into comfort. It *is* also true that he was found dead in bed with his watch in his hand, but a few minutes after the time which he had mentioned as destined to be his last. But it is equally true that on any great and sudden agitation he was subject to a swelling of the throat, which, without immediate assistance, might have killed him by strangulation. However, the coincidence of the event with the prophecy was at any rate most remarkable. Andrews was at his house at Dartford, in Kent, when Lord Lyttelton died at Pit Place, Epsom, thirty miles off. Andrews's house was full of company, and he expected Lord Lyttelton, whom he had left in his usual health, to join them the next day, which was Sunday. Andrews himself, feeling somewhat indisposed on that Saturday evening, retired early to bed, requesting Mrs. Pigou, one of his guests, to do the honours of the supper table for him. When in bed he fell into a sound sleep, but was waked between eleven and twelve o'clock by somebody opening his curtains. It was Lord Lyttelton in a night-gown and cap which Andrews recognised. He also spoke plainly to him, saying that he was come to tell him that "all was over." It was commonly reported that he informed him that there was another world, and bade him repent; but this was not true. I confine myself,' he adds, 'to the exact words of his narrative. It seems that Lord Lyttelton was fond of horse-play, or what the French call *mauvaise plaisanterie*; and, as he had often made Andrews the subject of it, the latter had threatened his lordship with manual chastisement the very next time that it should occur.

On the present occasion, thinking that the annoyance was being renewed, he threw at Lord Lyttelton's head the first things that he could find, which were his slippers. The figure retreated towards a dressing-room, which had no ingress or egress except through the bedchamber, and Andrews, very angry, leaped out of bed in order to follow it into the dressing-room. It was not there, however. Surprised and amazed, he returned at once into the bedroom, which he strictly searched. The door was locked on the inside, yet no Lord Lyttelton was to be found. He was astonished, but not alarmed, so convinced was he that it was only a trick of Lord Lyttelton, who, he supposed, must have arrived, according to his engagement, but after he (Mr. Andrews) was gone to bed. He therefore rang for his servant, and asked if Lord Lyttelton was not come. The man said, 'No, sir.' 'You may depend upon it,' he replied, out of humour, 'that he is somewhere in the house; he was here just now, and he is playing some trick or other.' But how he could have got into the bedroom, with the door locked, fairly puzzled both master and man. Convinced, however, that he was still somewhere in the house, Mr. Andrews in his anger ordered that no bed should be given to him, saying that he might go to an inn or sleep in the stables. Be this, however, as it may, he never appeared again, and Mr. Andrews went off to sleep. It happened that Mrs. Pigou was engaged to go to town early the next morning. What was her astonishment—having heard the disturbance of the night before—to learn on her arrival about nine o'clock that Lord Lyttelton had died the very night that he was supposed to have been seen at Dartford. She immediately sent an express to Dartford with the news, upon the receipt of which Mr. Andrews, who was then quite well, swooned away. He could not understand the affair; but it had a most serious effect upon his health, so that, to use his own expression, he was not himself or a man again for three years. 'Such,' adds Mr. Plumer Ward, 'is this celebrated story, stripped of its ornaments and exaggera-

tions ; and I for one own—if not convinced that this was a real message from Heaven, which certainly I am not—that I at least think the hand of Providence was seen in it, working upon the imagination, if you please, and therefore suspending no law of nature—though, after all, that is an ambiguous term—but still Providence in a character not to be mistaken.'

Lord Brougham confesses in the first volume of his autobiography that 'there never was to all appearance a better authenticated fact than the story of Lord Lyttelton's Ghost. I have heard,' he adds, 'my father tell the story, but coupled with his conviction that it was either a pure invention or the accidental coincidence of a dream with the event. I believe that every such seeming miracle, like every ghost story, is capable of explanation. My father had heard the particulars from a lady, a Mrs. Affleck, during a visit which he made to London in 1780, not very long after the death of Lord Lyttelton. My father was convinced that the female tendency to believe in the marvellous naturally produced the statement that the moment of his death had exactly corresponded with the time as predicted in the dream. The story was told with corroborating circumstances, one of which was the attempt to cheat the ghost by altering the hour on the clock ; and the tale obtained a surprising degree of credit considering the unsubstantial foundation on which it really rested.'

THE WITTY DUKE OF WHARTON

Most readers of modern anecdote biography, and most students of English history in the reign of the first two Georges, have heard at all events of the name of the witty Duke of Wharton ; and if they do not remember him in prose history, they will not forget the character of him drawn by Pope in one of his Moral Essays :

> Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days,
> Whose ruling passion was the lust of praise,
> Born with whate'er could win it from the wise,
> Women and fools must like him, or he dies.

Though wondering senates hang on all he spoke,
The club must hail him master of the joke.
Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?
He'll shine a Tully and a Wilmot too.
Thus, with each gift of nature and of art,
And wanting nothing but an honest heart;
Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt,
And most contemptible to show contempt;
His passion still, to covet general praise;
His life, to forfeit it a thousand ways;
A constant bounty, which no friend has made;
An angel tongue, which no man can persuade;
A fool with more of wit than half mankind;
Too rash for thought, for action too refined;
A tyrant to the wife his heart approves,
A rebel to the very king he loves;
He dies, sad outcast of each church and state,
And, harder still! flagitious, yet not great.
Ask you why Wharton broke through every rule?
'Twas all for fear the knaves should call him fool.

Let me therefore bring before my readers a brief outline of his Grace's singular career, which will be found to justify the words of Horace Walpole, who thus describes him: 'With attachment to no party, though with talents to govern any, this lively man changed the free air of Westminster for the gloom of the Escurial, the prospect of King George's Garter for the Pretender's; and, with utter indifference to all religion, the frolic lord, who had written a ballad on the Archbishop of Canterbury, died in the habit of a Capuchin.' That this outline is in the main correct I shall proceed to show with the leave of my readers.

The Whartons, successively barons, earls, marquises, and eventually for a brief space dukes of Wharton, took their name from a certain 'fair lordship' on the banks of the river Eden, and were of great antiquity in the county of Westmoreland. The first member of the House, however, of whom we have any detailed account is Sir Thomas Wharton, Governor of the city and castle of Carlisle in the reign of Henry VIII., who, by the aid of his neighbour Sir William Musgrave and a force of only 300 men, gallantly routed a large body of Scottish invaders, and took prisoners the Earl of Cassilis and the Lord

of Glencairn. Two years later he marched into Scotland along with Lord Dacre 'of the north,' and was made a peer of England for his services at the taking of Dumfries. Under Philip and Mary he was Lord Warden of the Middle Marches, and afterwards General Warden of all the marches on the Scottish frontier. Of his son, the second, and of his grandson, the third Lord Wharton, there is little to record except that they succeeded in due course to the title so honourably gained by Sir Thomas, and married into the noble families of Devereux, Earl of Essex, and Clifford, Earl of Cumberland. The third Lord Wharton had the misfortune of losing both his sons in his own lifetime, the elder being killed in a duel with his friend James Stuart, the son of Lord Blantyre. In this unfortunate conflict, like that of Lord Mohun and the Duke of Hamilton, both of the combatants fell, and they were buried in one grave at Islington, or, as it was then called, Iseldon, or Iseldun, 'by order of the King.'

Of Philip, the fourth Lord Wharton, I have to record the fact that, though he was a violent Puritan and an active partisan of the Parliament during the Great Rebellion, he managed to keep his head safe on his shoulders under Charles II. and James II., and to leave by his first marriage an only daughter, from whom the present Lord Willoughby d'Eresby and Lord Cholmondeley are maternally descended; and also by his second marriage a son, Thomas, who in due course became fifth Lord Wharton. As his father had supported Puritanism when apparently triumphant, so now he, in his turn, gave his active support to the Revolution of 1688, and was raised to an earldom by Queen Anne, and subsequently, by George I., to the marquisate of Wharton, to say nothing of an Irish peerage as Earl of Rathfarnham and Marquis of Catherlogh—titles which at his death, in 1715, devolved upon his only son Philip, who thus became sixth Baron and second Earl and Marquis of Wharton whilst still a boy. It is of this youth, who was born in December 1698, that I have now to speak.

He seems to have been a tolerably precocious youth ; for, although he had been carefully educated at home, under the eye of his father—whose ambition, we are told, was to make him 'a great orator and patriot'—we hear of him, at the age of sixteen, getting secretly and privately married to a plain untitled girl, the daughter of a certain Major-General Holmes. Miss Lizzie Holmes, of course, was no equal match for the heir to two marquisates, two earldoms, a viscountcy, and a barony. The sad *mésalliance*, however, did not reach the ears of his parents for some little time ; and, luckily too, for the shock is said to have killed them both within the course of a year.

I cannot say that the fruits of this young gentleman's early training inspire me with any strong admiration for private as opposed to public school education. Papas are generally the very worst hands at training their youngsters—always excepting mammas—and young Master Philip would have got better over his first steps in his 'way through the world' if he had been sent to Eton, Westminster, or Winchester, and been taught by contact with his fellows that 'manners makyth man.' Probably his father's fussy supervision of his hopeful son's education was intended to make him, not merely a strong Whig in politics, but a Presbyterian in religion. His clandestine union with Miss Holmes, we are told, took place at the Fleet Prison, the union being celebrated by a 'Fleet parson,' and a ring of an old window curtain being used for the bride's wedding ring, as, we have already seen, was also the case with one of the 'fair Gunnings.' The old Marquis died in April, 1715, and the Marchioness followed her husband to the grave, as said above, in the course of the year. Yet it is admitted by Wharton's biographers that, although the match which the youth had made was 'no ways suitable to his birth or fortune, and far less to the great views which his father had of disposing of him in such a marriage as would have been a considerable addition to the fortune and grandeur of so illustrious a family,' there was no objection to be urged against

the young lady personally, except that she had no money or even a long pedigree. At all events, one thing is clear, and that is that she deserved a very great deal more of happiness than this 'Fleet marriage' brought to her. Not a word that I can find was ever urged against her conduct as a wife even by the Whartons. She and her boy-husband parted within a few months after their ill-starred marriage; and at the beginning of 1716 the bridegroom was sent (probably by the directions left by his father to his guardians) to travel abroad. The 'dominie' to whom he was entrusted was a French Huguenot pastor.

The result was just what might have been expected. The young Marquis kicked hard against the rigid system of his tutor. In passing through Germany his vanity was gratified by the bestowal of some petty order of knighthood— far inferior, of course, to the double coronet of a marquis, which he bore as a peer both of England and of Ireland. He played high of course, ran into debt like a gentleman, and after a brief space he cut all his entanglements, gave his tutor the slip, and set off post haste for the pleasant city of Lyons, where he managed to hide himself for a short time, the place of his retreat being unknown to the 'dominie.' His next proceeding was to write a letter to Prince James—the elder 'Pretender,' as he was styled by the Hanoverian party—who was then residing at Avignon, and to whom he sent the present of a fine racehorse or hunter. The Chevalier, in turn, resolved not to be outdone in civility, invited him to his *soi-disant* Court, where he spent a few days in pleasure, and it is said received from him the title of Duke of Northumberland, which just at that time had ceased to belong to the Percies and had not yet been conferred on the Smithsons.

After this freak he suddenly appeared at Paris, where he played a double game, visiting the widowed Queen of James II. at St. Germain, and borrowing from her 2,000*l.*, but at the same time not declining the attentions of the English Ambassador at the Tuileries, Lord Stair, to whose table he was often

invited as a guest. The story goes that, in order to get the money from the Queen—who is said even to have pledged her jewels in order to raise it for the young vagabond marquis—he engaged to lay the money out in promoting the interests of the exiled Stuarts in England, though in reality he spent it in play in the gambling houses of Paris. And he showed the depth of his cunning by telling a friend who remonstrated with him on his duplicity that, although till he could repay what he had borrowed he must remain a Jacobite and a nominal adherent of the Stuarts, he was really a Hanoverian at heart, but that as soon as the money obligation was discharged he would return to his allegiance to the Whigs and the friends of the reigning sovereign.[1]

The stay of the young Duke in Paris having been marked by a series of extravagances, to which the only parallel in our own age is to be found in the achievements of the late Marquis of Waterford, his Grace returned to England in the December of the same year ; but not being of age was unable to take his seat in the House of Peers. In Ireland, however, where the officials were not so squeamish, or at all events not so careful, and possibly more open to a bribe in the way of a promise of future support, he was admitted to the Upper House as Marquis of Catherlogh. He at once took up the side of the Government, of which he proved himself at all events an able and eloquent supporter, though how far an honest[2] one, it would be hard to say. However, he so distinguished himself in debate that, although still under age, he obtained from George I. the much-coveted strawberry leaves of a ducal

[1] This was an amusing illustration of the story which Dr. Johnson, somewhat turning the tables, tells us of his own biographer : 'James Boswell in the year 1745 was a fine boy, who wore a white cockade and prayed for King James till one of his uncles gave him a shilling on condition that he should pray instead for King George, which he accordingly did : so you see that Whigs of all ages are made in the same way.'

[2] A letter from the Duke to Mr. Walpole, just before his arrival in Paris to place himself in communication with James III., couched in the most insincere phrases, will be found in Cox's *Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole*, vol. ii.

coronet, being created in 1718 Duke of Wharton. 'If,' observes a writer in the English Cyclopedia, 'we put aside those bestowed on members, legitimate or illegitimate, of the royal family, this certainly was the most extraordinary creation of an English dukedom on record; and perhaps it may be regarded also as the most singular passage even in Wharton's remarkable career. Notwithstanding the practice which then prevailed of conferring that dignity with much less reserve than at present, the attainment of it under such circumstances must be held to bear strong testimony to the impression which the talents of the young nobleman made at his first appearance upon the stage of politics.' It may be added that, in the patent of his dukedom, it was specially stated that the title was conferred upon him on account of his own personal merits, as well as those of his father before him.

It was probably not until after he had attained his majority, early in the year 1720, that he took his seat in the English House of Peers. His name first appears in the records of the debates of April 5 in that year, when he joined warmly in the opposition to the great Government measure of the South Sea Bill, on the motion for its committal; but no record of his speech exists, for there were no Parliamentary reporters in the House of Lords at the time. He also spoke frequently on the same subject at the explosion of that wild scheme; and it was during a reply to a bitter invective from his lips, on February 4, 1721, that Lord Stanhope, then Secretary of State, burst a blood-vessel, which occasioned his death the next day. The Duke's next prominent appearance was as an opponent of the bill of pains and penalties against Bishop Atterbury; and this is the last speech of the Duke of Wharton that is noticed in the 'Parliamentary History.'

His Grace's estate, worth, it is said, some 16,000*l.* a year when he came to it, had by this time become so involved that his property was placed in the hands of trustees for the benefit of his creditors, and he was allowed only 1,200*l.* per annum. He now, perhaps with the view of adding to his income,

launched out in a literary speculation, by the publication of a political paper called the *True Briton*. This undertaking lasted about six months, the paper appearing twice in each week ; and during this time he seems to have exerted all his influence in every way against the Ministry and the Court. He even had himself enrolled as a member of the Wax Chandlers' Company in the City of London, in order that he might speak and vote at common-halls and other civic meetings. He, however, soon got tired of such unprofitable work, and, giving out that his intention was to retrench for a few years, he went off to the Continent in the early part of 1724. Proceeding first to Vienna, he made a distinguished figure at that Court for a short time ; then he set out for Madrid, where he dazzled the Spanish hemisphere, and, as we are told by his original biographer, 'his arrival alarmed the English Minister so much that an express was sent from Madrid to London, under an apprehension that the Duke was received there in the character of a Minister of the English King ; upon which his Grace was served with an order under the Privy Seal to summon him home.'

This order the Duke entirely disregarded ; 'for,' says Salmon, in the 'Chronological Historian,' 'his Grace, being in a coach when it was delivered to him, contemptuously threw it into the street without opening it, and soon after, it is said, declared himself a Roman Catholic.' 'He endeavoured,' continues the writer of his life, 'to stir up the Spanish Court not only against the person that delivered the warrant, but against the Court of Great Britain itself, for exercising an act of authority, as he was pleased to call it, within the jurisdiction of his Catholic Majesty's kingdom. After this he acted openly in the service of the Stuarts, and appeared at their Court at St. Germain, where he was received with many great marks of favour.'

The subsequent career of this 'spoiled child of fortune,' as he was called by one of his coronoted brethren, can be attributed only to madness. His wife, poor girl !—from whom he had

been torn away by his father and his 'dominie,' and whom he had since neglected on account of her having, contrary to his orders, brought her infant son up to London, where he died of the small-pox—was carried to her grave in April, 1726. He was at Madrid when he heard of her death, and immediately offered his hand to a Miss O'Beirne, or O'Byrne—the orphan daughter of an Irish gentleman, a colonel in the Spanish service—who was one of the maids of honour to the Queen of Spain. It is said that her Majesty, who always had a tender regard for the ladies of her Court, refused her consent to the union ; but the Duke threatened to kill himself outright, or, at all events, to starve himself to death, if she would not relent. At length the Queen gave way, and the marriage took place. It does not, however, appear to have been a very happy one, for the Duchess figures but very little as her husband's companion in his subsequent adventures.

We next hear of this wandering star at Rome, where, though he had taken a dukedom from the Hanoverian King of England, he accepted the Order of the Garter from the son of James II., and openly assumed the title of Duke of Northumberland, formerly bestowed upon him by that personage. But it seems to have been soon discovered that he was likely to be more of detriment than of service to the cause in which he had enlisted himself. 'As he could not always keep himself within the bounds of the Italian gravity,' says his first somewhat tender biographer, who has been substantially followed in all the later accounts, 'and had no employment to divert and amuse his over-active temper, he ran into his usual excesses, which being taken amiss, without falling into actual disgrace, it was thought advisable for him to remove from that city for the present.' His next appearance was in the spring of 1727 at the siege of Gibraltar, where, having offered his services as a volunteer to the King of Spain, he was appointed by the Conde de las Torres one of his aides-de-camp. Here, if we may believe the story told of him, he was constantly in the trenches, exposing himself to the hottest of the fire ; and

probably this was true, for his friends declared that his conduct savoured rather of reckless bravado than of sober English bravery. 'He went one evening,' it is related, 'close to the walls, near one of the posts of the town, and either called to, dared, or threatened the soldiers of the garrison. They asked who he was; he readily answered, "The Duke of Wharton;" and, though his Grace appeared there as an enemy, they suffered him to return to the trenches without firing one shot at him. Had they done otherwise he must inevitably have perished.' The only injury he received at the siege was a slight wound in his foot from the bursting of a grenade; and as a reward for what he had done, the King of Spain gave him a commission as colonel, attaching him at the same time to one of the Irish regiments. But this was small compensation for all that his frantic conduct lost him at home, where soon after a bill of indictment was preferred against him for an act of high treason, committed by appearing in arms before, and firing off cannon against, his Majesty's town of Gibraltar; a conviction followed in due course; and he lost by attainder both his peerage and all else that he possessed in his native country. Before this had happened, however, he had written to the Pretender, promising to come back to Rome, but received for answer a strong exhortation rather to make the best of his way to England, and try if he could accommodate matters there. Upon this he set out for Paris, where he arrived with his Duchess in May, 1728, and coolly again began to play his double game by placing himself in communication with the English King's Ambassador and also with his enemies, thus keeping up a most insincere political flirtation. He waited upon the English Minister, Mr. Walpole, who received him with abundance of civility, but was not a little surprised when, at parting, his Grace told him he was going to dine with the Bishop of Rochester, the exiled Atterbury. Walpole replied that, if he meant to dine with that prelate, there was no reason why he should tell him of his intention, which in reality was an insult to his royal master. From Paris he went to Rouen;

and here, when he first heard of his indictment for high treason, it is affirmed that he was visited by two emissaries from the English Minister, Walpole, who endeavoured to persuade him to avoid his fate by making some sort of submission to the Government ; but he remained deaf to all they could urge. In fact, he refused not only to write, but even to allow his friends to write in his name and on his behalf to the King, though it was known that on so doing a pardon was ready for him.

The rest of the Duke's history would seem to indicate that he was either actually mad or constantly drunk ; probably both suppositions were partially true. He extorted some further pecuniary assistance from the Pretender and also from other quarters ; but, notwithstanding these occasional supplies and his military pay, he was commonly involved in all the embarrassments of the most extreme poverty ; for whenever he received any money, if it escaped his clamorous rabble of creditors, it was spent as fast as his still untamed profusion and taste for luxury and dissipation could squander it. He now moved about as whim, or hope, or sometimes desperation drove him ; first to Paris, then to Orleans, then to Nantes, whence he took ship for Bilbao, and, leaving his Duchess there, went to join his regiment, which appears to have been stationed at Madrid. Some time after he is stated to have been in garrison at Barcelona, where he got into a quarrel with the Marquis de Risbourg, Governor of Catalonia, the end of which was that he received orders from the Spanish Court not again to enter Barcelona, but to repair to his quarters at Lerida. On this we are told that, giving way to melancholy, he fell into a deep consumption ; so that by the beginning of the year 1731 he had lost the use of his limbs, and was not able to walk from his bed to the fireside without assistance. After about two months he rallied somewhat, from drinking a mineral water in the mountains of Catalonia ; but in May, having gone with his regiment to Tarragona, he became again as ill as ever ; and, going back to the mineral spring, 'he fell,'

says his biographer, 'into one of those fainting fits to which he had for some time been subject, in a small village, and was utterly destitute of all necessaries, till some charitable fathers of a Bernardine convent, which happened to be near the place where he lay, hearing of his miserable condition, offered him what assistance their house afforded.'

After languishing in the convent for a week, he died there on May 31, 1731, and was buried the next day by the monks in the same manner in which one of themselves would have been interred. He appears, by all accounts, to have made a very penitent and Christian end. Horace Walpole says of the death of the Duke that the only account of it which he had seen, and which he gave in his 'Royal and Noble Authors,' came to him from 'a very good hand,' Captain Willoughby, who saw a picture of him in the habit of the convent where he died. He adds: 'If it was a Bernardine convent, the gentleman might confound them; but, considering that there is no life of the Duke but booksellers' trash, it is much more likely that they made a mistake.' The idea, however, which has been entertained by some writers, that on his death-bed the Duke became a monk, is too absurd to need repetition; for he was not only married, but had a wife living, and that wife was his second wife; so that had he been inclined to adopt the cowl, like Charles V., a double dispensation from Rome would have been necessary, and there was certainly no time even to apply for one, much less to procure one.

It is clear from what I have written above that the Duke was a man of a high order of intellect, though he proved a sad example of wasted talents. In his speeches in the House of Peers he was witty and apposite, and it is said that he was always listened to with pleasure, because of the fun which he was sure to introduce into the debates of that grave assembly. Occasionally, however, he met with a 'set down.' For instance, one day, as we learn from that storehouse of amusement, 'The Percy Anecdotes,' having reminded his brother peers that in the history of Rome he had read of a bad Minister of State,

one Sejanus, who had first tried to wean the Emperor's affections from his son and then to carry him abroad, and so paved the way for the ruin of Rome, he found more than his match in Lord Stanhope, who replied that the Romans had a law forbidding young men to speak in their Senate till they had learnt good manners and propriety of language, quoting from the earlier pages of Roman history an instance of a great man and a patriot who had a son so profligate that he tried to betray the liberties of the Republic, on which account his father had him whipped to death.

I have said that the Duke was a clever and able man ; this he showed not only by his speeches, but by his pen. His biographer tells us that, 'much of an orator as he was, owing to the debates not being reported, he could not talk to the whole nation, and therefore he wrote and printed his thoughts twice a week in a paper called the *True Briton*, several thousands of which being weekly dispersed, the Duke was pleased to find the whole kingdom giving attention to him and admiring his style and writing.' The *True Briton* ran to about seventy or eighty numbers, and was not a bad imitation of the *Spectator* and *Tatler*, which preceded it. Some of the papers are racy and witty, and many of them show a command of the English tongue which, if we may judge from original letters of the time, even from the pens of English peers, was very uncommon in the reign of George I. To his friend Bishop Atterbury, when in the Tower, he wrote a really noble letter, which begins thus happily and wittily :

'My Lord,—While I can yet write to you, I must and I will correspond with you, till the very moment that it is felony (to do so), and when I can no longer write *to* you I will write *of* you.'

The Duke also published a masterly letter to 'his friends in Great Britain and Ireland,' esplaining his reasons for leaving his native country and espousing the cause of his royal master, 'James III.' In this letter he says that he had seen all the Whiggish principles taught him by his father broken,

arbitrary laws introduced, the Convocation silenced, and orthodoxy discouraged; and that, having seen at Avignon the prince whose face 'beamed with hereditary right,' and who promised to redress the wrongs of the English, he had chosen to tender to him his allegiance.

The Duke of Wharton must have been fairly prolific with his pen, if it be true that a bookseller named Ritson, towards the end of the last century, collected the Duke's poetical works, and prepared a memoir of their author, with a view to publication. At the sale of Ritson's books in 1803, the MS. was purchased by Mr. John Nichols; but I cannot find that it was ever actually published, either in or out of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, of which the latter was the editor and proprietor. The late Dr. Langhorne also at one time hinted his intention of writing a life of Wharton 'from materials in his possession,' as may be seen by reference to 'Effusions of Friendship and Fancy.'[1] A few poetical pieces by the Duke, or said to be by him, are to be found in the first volume of the 'New Foundling for Wit.' One of the best of them is an ode on the 'Banishment of Cicero.' Two pieces of poetry by the Duke are published in Mr. Nichols's Collections. Walpole says that 'an ode by him on "The Fear of Death," was printed in folio in 1739, "communicated to the public by a merchant lately arrived from Spain,"' but I cannot find a copy of it in the British Museum. He also wrote a parody of a song sung at the Opera House by Mrs. Tofts on her leaving the English stage and returning to Italy. This is to be seen in 'Ralph's Miscellaneous Poems,' page 131. That, however, he wrote very much more than these few pieces in verse which have come down to us[2] is probable from the

[1] Vol. i. p. 25.

[2] In one of his ballads the Duke of Wharton bantered himself on his own want of bravery. I refer to a song which he made on being seized by the guard in St. James's Park for singing the Jacobite air 'The King shall have his ain again.' This ballad is quoted by Horace Walpole in his 'Royal and Noble Authors:'

> 'The Duke he drew out half his sword,
> The guard drew out the rest,'

fact that a bookseller's miscellany published during his lifetime was styled 'Whartoniana.' One of his facetious poems, published (at a penny) at Edinburgh, in 1728, is entitled 'The Drinking Match:' it is a mock-heroic ballad, commemorating a drinking bout at Eden Hall, near Carlisle, the seat of Sir C. Musgrave. It is an imitation of 'Chevy Chase,' and is not without merit. As it is not generally known, I take the liberty of reproducing it here from a Collection of old Ballads.

THE DRINKING MATCH AT EDEN HALL.

God prosper long from being broke
The Luck[1] of Eden Hall;
A doleful drinking-bout I sing,
There lately did befall.

To chase the spleen with cup and can,
Duke Philip took his way,
Babes yet unborn shall never see
The like of such a day.

The stout and ever-thirsty Duke
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure within Cumberland
Three live-long nights to take.

Sir Musgrave too, of Martindale,
A true and worthy knight,
Eftsoon with him a bargain made,
In drinking to delight.

The bumpers swiftly pass about,
Six in a hand went round;
And with their calling for more wine,
They made the hall resound.

Now when these merry tidings reach'd
The Earl of Harold's ears,
'And am I' (quoth he, with an oath)
'Thus slighted by my peers?

'Saddle my steed, bring forth my boots,
I'll be with them right quick;
And, master sheriff, come you too,
We'll know this scurvy trick.'

'Lo, yonder doth Earl Harold come
(Did one at table say);
'Tis well,' reply'd the mettled Duke,
'How will he get away?'

[1] A pint bumper at Sir Christopher Musgrave's.

When thus the Earl began: 'Great Duke,
I'll know how this did chance,
Without inviting me, sure this
You did not learn in France.

'One of us two for this offence,
Under the board shall lie;
I know thee well, a duke thou art,
So some years hence shall I.

'But trust me, Wharton, pity 'twere
So much good wine to spill,
As these companions here may drink,
Ere they have had their fill.

'Let thou and I, in bumpers full,
This grand affair decide.'
'Accurs'd be he,' Duke Wharton said,
'By whom it is deny'd.'

To Andrews, and to Hotham fair,
Full many a pint went round,
And many a gallant gentleman
Lay sick upon the ground.

When, at the last, the Duke espy'd
He had the Earl secure,
He ply'd him with a full pint-glass,
Which laid him on the floor.

Who never spoke more words than these
After he downwards sunk,
'My worthy friends, revenge my fall,
Duke Wharton sees me drunk.'

Then, with a groan, Duke Philip held
The sick man by the joint,
And said, 'Earl Harold, 'stead of thee,
Would I had drank this pint.

'Alack! my very heart doth bleed,
And doth within me sink;
For surely a more sober earl
Did never swallow drink.'

With that the sheriff in a rage,
To see the Earl so smit,
Vow'd to revenge the dead-drunk peer
Upon renown'd Sir Kit.

Then stepp'd a gallant 'squire forth,
Of visage thin and pale,
Lloyd was his name, and of Gang Hall
Fast by the river Swale;

'Who said he would not have it told
Where Eden river ran,
That unconcern'd he should sit by;
So, sheriff, I'm your man.'

Now when these tidings reach'd the room
Where the Duke lay in bed,
How that the 'squire suddenly
Upon the floor was laid:

'O heavy tidings!' (quoth the Duke)
'Cumberland witness be,
I have not any captain more
Of such account as he.

'Like tidings to Earl Thanet came,
Within as short a space,
How that the under-sheriff too
Was fallen from his place.'

'Now God be with him' (said the Earl)
'Sith 'twill no better be,
I trust I have within my town,
As drunken knights as he.'

Of all the number that were there,
Sir Bains he scorn'd to yield;
But with a bumper in his hand,
He stagger'd o'er the field.

Thus did this dire contention end,
And each man of the slain
Were quickly carried off to sleep—
Their senses to regain.

God bless the King, the Duchess fat,
And keep the land in peace,
And grant that drunkenness henceforth
'Mong noblemen may cease.

And likewise bless our royal prince,
The nation's other hope,
And give us grace for to defy
The Devil and the Pope.

As might be expected, all sorts of stories—some true and others perhaps false—have been fathered on the individual who has been used by authors for a century and a half 'to point a moral or adorn a tale,' as the 'eccentric,' the 'witty,' the 'wanton,' the 'depraved,' the 'licentious,' and the 'profligate' Duke of Wharton. I will select a few, if only to show that in his Grace's character virtues and vices were blended

in close proximity, and therefore in the strongest contrasts. Dr. Young published a poem entitled 'The Love of Fame the Universal Passion.' The Duke read it, and was so pleased with it that he sent the author a cheque for 2,000*l.*—which his Grace's bankers duly honoured, his account at the time being satisfactory. On one of his brother peers crying out at this extravagance, the Duke coolly remarked that the poem would have been cheap at double the price, and that he only regretted that he could not send him a second cheque for the same amount on its reaching a second edition. Lord Stair, when Ambassador at Paris, on receiving a visit from the Duke, began to lecture him on his eccentric conduct, and to preach about the virtues of his father, the Marquis. The Duke, thinking this rather cool, even from one who was many years his senior, reminded his lordship that he too had a worthy and deserving parent, in whose steps he trusted that he also would follow. The wit of the reply lay in the fact that Lord Stair's father had done anything rather than distinguish himself by his honesty. On one occasion, when an industrious fit seized him, the Duke translated the first book of 'Télémaque,' and wrote to his friends that he had been 'conversing with his friends Telemachus and Mentor, in order to persuade them to open a campaign against all enemies to common-sense.'

On the day before making his speech on behalf of Atterbury in the House of Lords, it is said that he went to Chelsea to see the Prime Minister, Sir R. Walpole, professing to be anxious to set himself right with the Court. The clever and crafty Minister was taken in for once, for he went through the whole case with him, pointing out the strong and weak points. The Duke walked quietly home, sat up drinking all night, and the next day spoke for the bishop in the most masterly manner. It should be mentioned that the Duke's father, in one of his fits of anger, had foretold that if his son learnt his faith and his politics from Atterbury, he would be sure to take to wrong courses, and would be ruined in the end. Pennant, writing in the latter part of last century, tells us

that he found some persons who lived near the Duke's place, Wharton Hall, on the borders of Yorkshire and Westmoreland, and who spoke of his dissolute conduct as being still remembered in the neighbourhood, adding, 'In all his acts he showed an equal resolve to defy the laws of God and man, especially by hunting on Sundays.'

We have said that, although the Duke had nominally an income of between 15,000*l.* and 20,000*l.* a year before he was more than just of age, he was obliged to come to an arrangement with his creditors, and to live upon an allowance of 1,200*l.* annually. With a wife, and a variety of vices also, to support, it is not to be wondered at that he soon got into debt, and that he was hunted by 'duns' in France, just as he was in England. On one occasion, while in the North of France, he found himself hard pressed by one of these gentlemen, but he was clever enough, though hampered by the presence of his duchess, to take a small boat and drop quietly down the Loire, at the mouth of which river he took his passage by a ship to Bilbao, in Spain, where his enemies could not or dared not follow him.

That in his early years the Duke stood high in the opinion of the public may be inferred from the fact that in the dedication pages of two separate publications by different authors he is spoken of as being 'above flattery and above praise, conspicuous for universal learning, steadfastness of soul, contempt of power and grandeur, love of his country, zeal for liberty, and the desire of doing good to mankind—in a word, as *non sibi sed patriæ natus.*' And yet in a satirical poem on 'The Duke of Wharton's Wens,' in the Harleian MSS. (6933), a lover, after giving a list of other supposed impossibilities, speaks of forgetting his lady love

> When Wharton's just and learns to pay his debts.

Either, therefore, the praise of the writer of the dedication was most fulsome and venal, or else the Duke was cruelly maligned by the last-named scribbler. In all probability the latter was really the case, for one of his contemporaries

remarks that 'money always seemed to him like a disease of which he could not too soon cure himself.' This surely does not look as if the Duke was really dishonest or unjust, or even ungenerous.

'It is difficult,' remarks Horace Walpole in his 'Royal and Noble Authors,' 'to give an account of the works of so mercurial a man, whose library was a tavern, and women of pleasure his muses. A thousand sallies of his imagination may have been lost, for he wrote for fame no more than he acted for it.' Perhaps Horace Walpole on this occasion, as on many others, 'hit the right nail on the head.' The Duke must have been indeed 'mercurial.' 'Like Buckingham and Rochester, Philip Duke of Wharton comforted all the grave and dull,' says Horace Walpole, 'by throwing away the brightest profusion of parts on witty fooleries, debaucheries, and scrapes, which may mix graces with a great character, but can never make one.' Mr. Seward remarks that the character of Lovelace in 'Clarissa' has always been supposed to be that of this nobleman; and the supposition is rendered the more probable as Richardson printed the *True Briton*, in which the Duke wrote constantly.

The Duke lived for some years at Twickenham, at a place called Grove House, which after his death was occupied by the younger Craggs, the friend of Addison, Steele, and Tickell, and the opponent of Sir Robert Walpole in Parliament. The house, which was pulled down many years ago, is said to have been originally built by Inigo Jones for the Earl of Rochester. At Twickenham he was the neighbour and acquaintance of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who wrote an epilogue for a tragedy which he began on 'Mary Queen of Scots.' This poem was never finished, and all of it that remains is a brace of couplets preserved in a 'Miscellany' like 'flies in amber.' They run as follows:

> Sure were I free, and Norfolk were a pris'ner,
> I'd fly with more impatience to his arms
> Than the poor Israelite on the serpent gaz'd
> When life was the reward of every look.

Well and wittily is it remarked by Bolton in his 'Extinct Peerage' that 'the Duke succeeded his father, Thomas, in all his titles and abilities, but in none of his virtues.' And it is indeed strange that the man who could give 2,000*l.* as a present to a poet, and administer a witty rebuff to an officious ambassador, could be guilty of such an unmeaning trick as knocking up his guardian in the middle of the night, in order to borrow a pin; or at another time in France serenading respectable persons at their country châteaux, one of whom very nearly killed him by a stray shot, mistaking him for a robber.

With regard to the authorities on which I have drawn for my materials in the above sketch, I should say that, besides Walpole's 'Royal and Noble Authors,' I have referred mainly to a scarce work, entitled 'Memoirs of the Life of his Grace Philip, late Duke of Wharton, by an Impartial Hand.' It is prefixed to two octavo volumes published in 1732, entitled 'The Life and Writings of Philip, late Duke of Wharton,' but which contain only the seventy-four numbers of the *True Briton* and his speech on the bill of pains and penalties against Atterbury, the paging of which is a continuation of that of the *True Briton*, although it has a title-page of its own, dated 1724. There is another publication, in two volumes 8vo, without date, entitled 'The Poetical Works of Philip, late Duke of Wharton, and others of the Wharton Family, and of the Duke's Intimate Acquaintance, particularly Lord Bolingbroke, Dean Swift, Lady Wharton, Doctor Delany, Lord Dorset, Major Pack, the Hon. Mrs. Wharton, &c.' These two volumes, however, appear to have been all printed in 1727 (before the Duke's death), with the exception only of this general title-page and a life of the Duke, which is substantially the same with that noticed above, and is here stated to be 'communicated by a person of quality, and one of his Grace's intimate friends.' The first volume contains very little that is even attributed to the Duke; but in the second are some letters in prose, addressed to Lady Wharton, his

father's first wife, and her poetical paraphrase of the 'Lamentations of Jeremiah.'

The following vindication of the Duke of Wharton is to be found in a volume of scarce broadsides in the British Museum. It bears no printer's name, but only the date 1728; it was probably printed in Dublin. It will need no explanation or commentary to those who have read the story as I have told it above :—

Pray isn't it queer
That a wild Peer,
So known for rakish tricks
As Wharton, should
At last be good
And kiss the crucifix?

I needs must call
It wondrous all
That he who spurned the Creed
Shall grow devout
And tack about
To penance at Madrid.

What less could he
Than thus agree
With Chevalier Divino,
Who gave him two
Brave titles new
But could not make him dine, oh!

This Duke is then
Duk'd o'er again,
And glorious shines his garter;
What honours more
Has fate in store
Ere Tyburn dubs him martyr

Old Thomas, rise,
And if you've eyes
To light you through the shades,
See, see, your son
How he has run
From beggary to beads!

'Mong jilts and lasses
Of all classes,
When he was spent and gone,
Oh, then he mourned,
Beseeched and turned
To her of Babylon.

And have you not,
Old gracious Trot,
One Donna right and bright,
That might solàce
In such a case
The conscience of your knight?

Our Chevalier
Is now so bare
He hasn't to give alms;
Then, mother, take
For Jemmy's sake,
Some care of Wharton's qualms.

No sooner sought
But out was brought
An Abigail of rank;
And so he played
With this same maid
A second silly prank.

He wed the lass
He took to Mass
All in an errant whim,
And did dispense
With marriage pence
As she dispensed with him.

Was nothing given?
Th' affair was even;
He settled nothing on her:
But he's a Peer
Of honour rare,
And she's—a Dame of Honour.

It should be added, by way of conclusion, that, although the dukedom and marquisate of Wharton have ceased to exist any longer by reason of the attainder passed upon the nobleman whose freaks I have here related, there are still those who claim to be descended from the older barons of Wharton, from whom the Duke was sprung, but whose rights the attainder of their descendant could not affect. So far as I can learn, the barony is not extinct, but dormant, or rather 'in abeyance,' out of which it may please her Majesty at any moment to call it by a stroke of her pen in favour of any one of the rival claimants of it—namely, Lord Willoughby d'Eresby and Lord Lamington, as representatives (through the

Lockharts of Carnwath) of Philadelphia, youngest daughter of the fourth Lord, and Mr. Charles K. Kemeys Tynte, of Halsewell, Somersetshire, in right of his descent from Mary, her elder sister. Mr. Tynte's father preferred a claim for this peerage about fifty years ago, but his claim has never yet been decided by the House of Lords.

THE DUCAL HOUSE OF BUCKINGHAM

If I remember right, Sir Bernard Burke, in his work on the 'Vicissitudes of Families,' draws attention to the fact that a considerable number of our ducal houses are largely built up by the accumulation of a succession of wealthy heiresses. This is eminently the case, as we all know, of the Leveson-Gowers, the Bentincks, the Cavendishes, and the Pelham-Clintons ; but it is especially true of the noble house which holds the double coronet of Buckingham and Chandos, and whose male members,[1] though paternally they are Grenvilles, can scarcely know by what surname to call themselves in the perplexity which must arise between 'Temple' and 'Nugent,' 'Brydges' and 'Chandos'—all which names they have taken within the last century and a half in addition to their own, quartering the respective arms of at least four other noble houses together with their own original coat, that of 'Grenville of Wootton.'

The Grenvilles, as we learn from the visitations of the heralds and from the county histories, have been seated, as landed but untitled gentlemen, on their hereditary lands at Wootton, near Aylesbury, since the reign of Henry I. They were county magistrates and squires and Members of Parliament, and generation after generation served the office of high sheriff, but they rose no higher. They did not care for the venal honour of one of those baronetcies which were scattered far and wide among the owners of broad acres by our first Stuart king ; and they lived, if not in retirement, at all events out of the way of such court honours as knighthood. The

[1] This was written before the death of the last Duke.

first member of their House who appears to have mounted on the lowest step of that ladder which led ultimately to the dukedom was Mr. Richard Grenville, M.P. for Andover and Buckingham, who in the reign of Queen Anne, 1710, married Miss Hester Temple, the eldest daughter of Sir Richard Temple of Stowe, and ultimately her father's and her brother's heiress. Her father had been a leading Member of the House of Commons at the time of Charles II. ; and her brother, who had served as lieutenant-general under Marlborough in the Low Countries, was created Lord Cobham, with remainder to herself and the issue male of her marriage with Mr. Grenville. Like misfortunes, honours and coronets seldom or never come singly ; and it was only a few months after carrying the Temple property, including the broad acres of Stowe, into her husband's family that the lady was created in her own right Countess Temple.

Her son and successor, thus enriched and loaded with honours, became a leading statesman in the reign of George II., under whom he held the office of Lord Privy Seal. The King, however, could not endure him, probably on account of a certain active part which he took in public affairs at the time when John Wilkes and his Majesty were at variance. If, however, the King did not like him, he feared him ; for Sir Nathaniel Wraxall tells us that the King, unable to refuse him the Garter, behaved with positive rudeness at the moment when he ought to have fastened round his neck and knees the blue badge of the order, which he flung upon him before his Court with a reluctance which he took no pains to disguise, 'muttering indistinctly some expression of aversion, and turning his back at the instant.' On his death the earldom of Temple passed to his nephew, George, the third Earl, who in turn mounted another step on the ladder of promotion by his marriage with an heiress, the Lady Mary Elizabeth Nugent, only child of Robert, Earl Nugent in the Peerage of Ireland, a cadet of the House of Westmeath, who, having sat for several years in the English House of Commons, became successively

a Lord of the Treasury, one of the Vice-Treasurers of Ireland, and first Lord of Trade and Plantations.

This nobleman appears to have been a singular character. He was something of a courtier, and something also of a bad poet ; and had abandoned the ancient faith of his forefathers, not to the improvement of his morals. Glover speaks of him as 'a jovial Irishman, who had left Ireland and Popery for the Protestant religion, money, and a widow.' His second wife appears to have combined in herself, at all events, the last two qualifications of wealth and widowhood. She was the sister and heiress of Craggs, the well-known Secretary of State in the reign of George I., who lies buried in Westminster Abbey. 'She brought him, however, neither felicity nor issue,' says Wraxall, 'but she brought him the seat and estate of Gosfield Hall, in Essex, one of the finest properties in that county ;' and he showed, we may add, his appreciation of the fact by taking the name of Craggs and prefixing it to his signature as Lord Nugent. He had the further good fortune to get rid of her speedily and to marry another widow, the Countess of Berkeley, by whom he had a daughter, whom he endowed with the wealth of his second wife.

As a proof that Lord Nugent was a wit in his way, we may remind our readers of an old story told of him when a Member of the House of Commons. A bill being introduced for the purpose of securing the better watching of London at night, one of the clauses went to propose that the 'Charleys' should be *compelled to sleep in the daytime* ; whereon his lordship got up, and, with a spice of dry humour, suggested that he 'should like to be personally included in the bill along with the Charleys, for that he was so constantly tormented with the gout that he could not sleep at night, and would be very thankful for a little rest by day.' On another occasion, at a party at Lord Temple's house in Pall Mall, he made a bet that he would spit in Lord Bristol's hat. He won his bet, but received a challenge the next morning ; and was forced to apologise rather than fight a duel in a cause which, however

it ended, would have been sure to expose him to ridicule. The story will be found told at full length in the pages of Sir Nathaniel Wraxall.

But to return to Lord Temple, for we have not yet half done with the heiresses who have jointly built up that illustrious house. As we have said, Lord Temple secured as his wife the only child of Earl Nugent, and on his father-in-law's death he inherited his Irish estates ; soon afterwards he was created Earl of Clare, and raised by the favour of the King a few years later to the marquisate of Buckingham.

His son, Richard, the second Marquis, followed the example set by his father and his great-grandfather, and acquired the estates of the ducal House of Chandos by his marriage with the heiress of that illustrious family. Thus Wootton, and Stowe, and Gosfield, and Canons—four magnificent estates, each of them more than a patrimony for a Continental prince —all met in one person, his son and successor, who was raised to the title of Duke of Buckingham and Chandos at the coronation of King George IV., the political influence which he exercised in virtue of his immense wealth and possessions and his connection with the Pitts and Lord Grenville being such as to empower him to dictate to the existing Ministry the terms on which he would give them his support in Parliament. Gosfield Hall, having afforded a home for royalty in exile—for it was at one time the residence of Louis XVIII.—has passed into other hands, and is now owned by an Essex manufacturer ; and, though it is still kept up pretty nearly in the same condition in which it stood a century ago, it is not likely at present to be the rendezvous of political parties as it was in the good old days of George III., when dukes, earls, and marquises met there in troops to discuss politics and drink the port wine stored up in Lord Nugent's cellars.

Canons too—that lordly house near Edgware, with all its glories and greatness—is gone, destroyed by fire. Stowe too—yes, even princely Stowe—in our own time suffered a temporary eclipse, its contents being disposed under George Robbins's

hammer; while its owner died not at Stowe, but in hired apartments at a London hotel!

His son, the last Duke, however, by careful and judicious management of the wreck of this princely property, so far brought matters round as to take up his residence at Stowe again, though he made for many years his home at the old family estate at Wootton. He, too, married twice, and had a family of daughters; and although, owing to the fact that his Grace had no son to succeed him, the ducal title of Buckingham, with its usual fatality, suffered eclipse at his death, yet he left a sister who, under the fortunate provisions of the patent of creation, inherited and will probably transmit to her descendants for many generations to come the earldom of Temple, which upwards of a century ago was first bestowed on his great-great-great-grandmother, Hester Temple of Stowe, whose name is recorded above.[1]

On the last page I have alluded to the singular fatality which for many centuries has attended the title of Buckingham. If we may rely upon the authority of the 'Historic Peerage' of Sir Harris Nicolas, it appears that in the year in which the battle of Hastings was fought, the earldom of Buckingham was conferred by the Conqueror on Walter Gifford, with whose son and successor it ended before a century had passed. In the reign of Henry I. we find the earldom vested in Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, but apparently only for a time, as it does not seem to have been claimed by any other member of that family. In 1377 we find Thomas Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, the youngest son of King Edward III., created Earl of Buckingham; but twenty years afterwards he was murdered, and in 1399 the title became extinct by his son's decease. Again, in 1444 we find the title revived, this time, however, as a dukedom, in the person of Humphrey Stafford, son of the Earl of Stafford, by his

[1] The Duke's eldest daughter, on the Duke's death, succeeded to the Scottish barony of Kinloss; and the title of Lord Cobham passed to his Grace's kinsman, Lord Lyttelton.

marriage with Anne Plantagenet, sister and heiress of Humphrey, the last Earl. As every reader of history is aware, he was made Lord High Constable of England, but he was killed at the battle of Northampton ; his grandson and heir, the second Duke, like his predecessor, was High Constable of England, but in the year 1483 was beheaded for high treason, when the title was forfeited. Three years later, however, by royal favour the dukedom was revived in the person of his son, who also filled the office of High Constable ; but he too was attainted and beheaded by Henry VIII., when all the honours of the Staffords were forfeited, never to be restored. They

> . . . fell like Lucifer,
> Never to rise again.

A century passes by, and the first Stuart holds the throne on which the Tudors sat. George Villiers, the King's favourite, so familiar to the readers of English history and of Sir Walter Scott by his court nickname of 'Steenie,' is created Earl, and Marquis, and presently Duke of Buckingham. But the same curse follows the honour, and dogs its holder to his death. Knight of the Garter and Lord High Admiral of England, my Lord Duke, you may be ; but for all that you cannot escape your destiny ; and the visitor who walks round the streets of Portsmouth is still shown the house in which you met your sudden and cruel end more than a century and a half ago by the hand of the assassin Felton, whose name is still held in execration, though your own character as an individual is none of the best and sweetest - if, at least, it be still true that

> Only the memories of the just
> Smell sweet and blossom in their dust.

The ducal title was inherited by his son, George Villiers, but became extinct at his death without issue in 1687. His grandmother, who had received a patent of the title in duplicate, had already died, and her title, too, died with her.

I pass on. Another sovereign is on the throne, and in 1703 I find John Sheffield, Marquis of Normanby, created Duke of Buckingham; and we cannot help entertaining a hope that the title may be found in this new family to be exempt from its old fatality. But no; the story is the same. On the death of the first Duke, in 1720, the coronet and strawberry leaves devolve upon his only son Edmund, who dies under age and unmarried, and I am obliged to record the extinction of the honour for the eighth time.

THE NOBLE HOUSE OF STAFFORD

The Prince and Princess of Wales, living as they do in the same county with the head of the family of Jerningham, whose park of Costessy, or Cossey, is not above an hour's journey by railway from Sandringham, ought really to take a more than common interest in the fortunes of Lord Stafford. And if my readers ask me why and wherefore, I would answer, because, if we may trust the heralds and peerage-makers, the paternal line of the Jerninghams is said to be of Danish origin. At all events, Weever writes as follows in his 'Ancient Funeral Monuments:'—

'This name has been of exemplarie note before the Conquest, if you will believe thus much that followeth, taken out of the pedigree of the Jerninghams by a judicious gentleman: Anno MXXX., Canute, King of Denmarke and of England, after his return from Rome, brought divers captains and souldiers from Denmarke, whereof the greatest part were christened here in England, and began to settle themselves here, of whom Jernegan, or Jernegham, and Jernihings, now Jennings, were of the most esteeme with Canute, who gave unto the said Jerningham certaine manors in Norfolke, and to Jennings certain manors lying upon the seaside near Harwich, in regard of their former services done to his father, Swenus, or Swene, King of Denmarke.'

Among our county historians few hold a higher position

than Blomefield, the author of the history of Norfolk ; and he confirms, or at all events follows, the statement of Weever, telling us that the Jerninghams derive their pedigree from one Jernagan, who was settled at Horham, in Suffolk, as far back as the reign of Stephen, and whose grandson, Sir Hubert Fitz-Jernegan, took part in the rebellion of the barons against King John, but submitted to Henry III., and obtained the royal pardon. His grandson, who married the heiress of the Fitzosberts and widow of a member of the House of Walpole, removed from Horham to Stonham-Jernegan, giving his name to the manor and parish in which he held his broad acres. His son acquired property at Somerleyton and elsewhere along the borders of Suffolk and Norfolk, in right, apparently, of his mother, and became the owner of large estates in the last-named county.

From him was descended in direct line Sir Henry Jernegan, or Jerningham (as the name came in process of time to be spelt), who is described by Sir Bernard Burke as 'of Huntingfield and Wingfield in Suffolk, and of Costessy in Norfolk.' His name is known to history as the first of the gallant knights and squires of the Eastern counties to declare openly for Queen Mary as the rightful heir to the throne on the death of Edward VI. ; and the Queen no sooner found herself firmly established in St. James's than she appointed him her Master of the Horse, and commanded him to be sworn a member of her Privy Council. From Queen Mary he obtained also large grants of lands, not only in the Eastern districts, such as Wingfield and Costessy, but also in 'the West Country,' in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire. He, however, fixed his chief residence at Costessy, near Norwich, and founded the magnificent structure known as Costessy Hall, where his descendants have mostly resided from that time. He subsequently rebuilt Costessy in the style which marked his age, and so enlarged it that he was able to entertain Queen Elizabeth there in one of her royal progresses. But the fact that he clung firmly to the ancient faith stood in

the way of his obtaining any advancement at the Lady Elizabeth's hands.

The grandson of this gentleman, in spite of belonging to a proscribed religion, inheriting a property which had been increased by the fortunate marriages of his father and grandfather with members of the noble Houses of Dacre and Throgmorton, was created a baronet in 1621. Like many another country gentleman who was loyal to the Stuart cause, he suffered severely in purse and person during the civil wars; and we are told by Blomefield that during the time of Cromwell the park at Costessy was let to go to rack and ruin, the mansion and the domain being let to a 'Roundhead' farmer, while the deer in the noble park were destroyed, just as was the case also at Wardour Castle.

After the Restoration the fortunes of the family were gradually retrieved by careful and judicious management, and Costessy once more took rank among the fine mansions of Norfolk. The Jerninghams, however, did not appear much at the Court of the Stuart or Brunswick sovereigns, living quietly and contentedly within their own park gates and practising the old-fashioned habits of hospitality and care for their tenantry. It is almost needless to add that they have been Roman Catholics without a break; and in the days of the penal laws their house was often searched for crucifixes, beads, and other proofs of 'recusancy.' In fact, I believe there is still to be seen the priest's hiding-place in the panelled walls of Costessy—now commonly called Cossey—just as is the case in so many other Roman Catholic mansions of the Tudor and Stuart times.

But if this be so, my readers will naturally wonder how the Jerninghams came to inherit the historic barony of Stafford. I will tell them, drawing for my materials on Burke's 'Peerage.' Sir George, the fifth Baronet, married in 1733 Miss Mary Plowden, eldest daughter and eventual heiress of a Roman Catholic gentleman in Shropshire, Mr. Francis Plowden, Comptroller of the Household to King James II., and of his

wife Mary, daughter of the Hon. John Stafford Howard, younger son of the unfortunate Sir William Howard, Viscount and Baron Stafford, who was beheaded and attainted in 1680. This nobleman was a staunch Roman Catholic, and had adhered to the royal cause in the great civil war. His services, however, had, as he considered, been very inadequately rewarded, and he frequently voted against the Court. He was accused by the infamous Titus Oates on October 23, 1678, as a party to the notorious Popish plot, and was committed to the Tower on the 30th of that month, along with several other Roman Catholic noblemen. His trial, however, was twice postponed in consequence of a dissolution of Parliament, so that it was not until November 30, 1680, that he was brought to the bar of the House of Lords on a charge of high treason. The trial lasted seven days, and terminated in a verdict of guilty, four of the Howards, his own relations, to their disgrace, having voted for his condemnation. The old Viscount, then in his seventieth year, made an excellent defence, and, by himself and his witnesses, proved discrepancies, flat contradictions, and perjury in the evidence of his accusers; yet the Lords found him guilty by a majority of fifty-five to thirty-one. Charles, who had been present at the trial in Westminster Hall, and who was convinced that Lord Stafford was innocent of the imputed treason, yet signed his death-warrant, with no other mitigation than that he should be simply beheaded. Though a Roman Catholic, he employed Burnet 'to comfort him by his instructions touching those points on which all Christians agree.' His lordship was led forth to execution on Tower Hill on December 29; he suffered with great firmness, protesting his innocence with his last breath. As he left no son, the viscountcy became extinct at his death; but it so happened that both he and his wife had been created Baron and Baroness Stafford in 1640, with remainder to their children, male and female. This title was restored in 1824, by the reversal of the attainder on the petition of Sir George W. Jerningham, in accordance with the report of the Committee

of Privileges in the House of Peers. Five years, however, even then had to pass away before Lord Stafford was enabled to take his seat on the Barons' Bench in the House of Peers, on account of his adherence to the Roman Catholic faith.

The day, however, came at last, on the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill ; and in May, 1829, the Parliamentary oaths were subscribed by 'the Right Hon. George William Stafford-Jerningham, Baron Stafford, Chevalier,' along with the rest of the newly emancipated Catholic peers.

The family of Stafford, one of the most illustrious and powerful in England, has figured conspicuously in the annals of the country. Its founder was one of the Bagots, who were landowners in Staffordshire at the time of the Conquest. Its principal historical personages are Humphrey de Stafford, a zealous partisan of Henry VI., who was created Duke of Buckingham [1] in 1465, and who along with his eldest son fell in the Wars of the Roses ; and Henry, his second son and successor in the title, the friend and accomplice, and afterwards victim, of Richard III., whose plots and tragic death have been immortalised by Shakespeare. The sad story of Edward Stafford, the third Duke, Lord High Constable of England, may also be read in the pages of the great dramatist. He, as everybody knows, imprudently quarrelled with Wolsey, who trumped up a charge of high treason against him, upon which the Duke was found guilty, and beheaded on Tower Hill. When the Emperor Charles V. heard of his execution, he is reported to have exclaimed, 'A butcher's dog has killed the finest *buck* in England.' The ducal title became extinct by his attainder ; and on the death of Henry, thirteenth Baron Stafford, in 1637, the barony was presumed to have descended to Roger Stafford, who, though he was great-grandson of the third Duke of Buckingham, and also of Margaret Plantagenet, daughter and heiress of George Duke of Clarence, and niece of Edward IV., had sunk to the lowest condition, and during the last years of an unhappy life bore the surname of Fludyer

[1] See the previous chapter, p. 221.

or Floyd. On his death, unmarried, in 1640, the male line of this great old family became extinct. His sister married a joiner of Newport, in Shropshire, and they had a son who, in spite of the royal blood which flowed in his veins, followed the trade of a cobbler.

Meanwhile the sister and sole heiress of Henry Stafford, the thirteenth and last Baron Stafford of the creation of 1299, had married Sir William Howard, son of the twentieth Earl of Arundel. On the death of Lord Stafford in 1637, the title was presumed to have devolved on Roger Stafford, as above mentioned ; but with respect to this 'claimant' a curious story is told by Sir Harris Nicolas in his 'Historic Peerage.' Though his father had been restored, yet on the son claiming it as his successor, he is said to have been unjustly denied the dignity on account of his poverty. Accordingly in 1640, by fine levied at Westminster, this Roger Stafford surrendered into the King's hands the barony of Stafford, in consideration of 800*l.* to be paid to him by the sovereign. The surrender, however, Sir H. Nicolas holds, was clearly illegal;[1] but, as he died unmarried, the male line of this creation is presumed to have come to an end when the barony of 1547 became extinct. On Roger Stafford submitting his title to the barony to the decision of King Charles (we are told by another historian), his Majesty declared that this luckless scion of a great race, having no part in the family inheritance, 'nor any lands or means whatsoever,' should make a resignation of all his claims to the title. A deed of surrender having been accordingly enrolled, in 1639 the King conferred anew the dignity on Sir William Howard, as above stated, and soon after elevated him to the rank of Viscount Stafford. The original barony of Stafford, it may be added, was created in 1299—thirty-five years after that of the premier baron, Lord De Ros.

Henry Stafford, the Duke's son and heir, was 'restored in blood' by an Act of Parliament passed in the first year of

[1] Such surrenders of titles with a view to regrants and settlements were common and legal in Scotland.

Edward VI., by which it was enacted 'that the said Henry Lord Stafford, and the heirs male of his body, may be taken and reputed as Lords Stafford, and that the said Henry be restored in blood ;' and accordingly his lordship was summoned to Parliament from 1548 to 1558. He married Ursula, daughter of Sir Richard Pole, K.G., and of Margaret Countess of Salisbury, niece of Edward IV. He was thus great-grandfather of the Mary Stafford, above mentioned, who married Sir William Howard, Lord Stafford ; and accordingly, in virtue of this descent, the present Lord Stafford claims, or has a right to claim, the revival in his favour of the original barony of 1299 ; in which case, if his lordship should be successful now or hereafter, the historic name of Stafford would stand fourth on the peerage roll of England.

A proof of the utter oblivion into which our Roman Catholic nobles had fallen during the continuation of the penal laws may be found in the title of Stafford, which was granted in 1786 as a marquisate to Earl Gower, one of the leading members of Lord Bute's Cabinet, and father of the first Duke of Sutherland. The fact, however, is that the title was not dead, but only dormant, and quite within the power of any holder of the crown to call back into life in favour of the Staffords or their descendants, even in the female line. Within forty years the title was actually revived, and since that time there have been two Lords Stafford ; just as during the temporary eclipse of the Courtenays, Earls of Devonshire, that title was bestowed as a dukedom on the House of Cavendish.

We have heard so much of late about claimants and impostors that I hardly know whether my readers will feel an interest in being informed or reminded, as the case may be, that for several years Sir George Jerningham, before attaining the peerage as Lord Stafford, was greatly annoyed by a Mr. Richard Stafford Cooke, who claimed to be heir of the ancient barony, and accordingly instituted expensive lawsuits to eject him from the property. In this, however, the claimant was defeated, though—like another Orton—he proceeded so far as

to attempt to take formal possession of the old baronial estates in Staffordshire and Shropshire, which happily still appertain to the family.

THE DUCAL HOUSE OF RICHMOND

If any one of my readers will take the trouble to cast his eye over the list of dukedoms in Lodge's or Burke's 'Peerage,' he will see that for four of the existing coronets adorned with ducal strawberry leaves—in other words, for a sixth of the entire body of our dukes—King Charles II. is responsible, inasmuch as the first possessors of the titles of Richmond, Grafton, St. Albans, and Buccleuch were sons of that sovereign by one or other of his many alliances, which I fear that I must scarcely dignify by the name of even morganatic unions. For instance, the first Duke of Buccleuch, better known in history as James Duke of Monmouth, was born to Charles by Miss Lucy Walters; the first Duke of St. Albans, by 'Nell Gwyn;' the first Duke of Grafton, by Barbara Villiers; while the founder of the ducal house of Richmond was Charles Lennox, the son of his Majesty by Mademoiselle Louise de Querouaille, a French lady, who, having been maid of honour to his sister, the Duchess of Orleans, was sent over to England by Louis XIV. with the not very creditable mission of watching over French interests at the Court of St. James's—in other words, of making our worthless sovereign a paid pensioner under 'Le Grand Monarque.'

Besides the above-named ducal titles so freely dispensed by the second Charles, it would seem that similar honours, which have since become extinct, were bestowed by him at various times on various favourites; and the names of the Duchess of Cleveland and the Duchess of Portsmouth will readily occur to the student of the history of England under the Stuarts in the list of ennobled favourites who basked in the sunshine of royalty, and whose claim to such honours, to say the least, was not based on virtue.

'In 1670,' says Burnet, 'the King declared a new mistress, and made her Duchess of Portsmouth. She had been maid of honour to Madame the King's sister, and had come over with her to Dover, where the King had expressed such a regard to her that the Duke of Buckingham, who hated the Duchess of Cleveland, intended to put her on the King. He told him that it was a decent piece of tenderness for his sister to take care of some of her servants. So she was the person the King easily consented to invite over. That Duke assured the King of France that he could never reckon himself sure of Charles but by giving him a mistress that should be true to his interests. It was soon agreed to. So the Duke of Buckingham sent her with a part of his equipage to Dieppe, and said he would presently follow. But he, who was the most inconstant and forgetful of all men, never thought of her more, but went to England by way of Calais. So Montague, then Ambassador at Paris, hearing of this, sent over for a yacht for her, and sent some of his servants to wait on her and to defray her charge till she was brought to Whitehall; and then Lord Arlington took care of her. So the Duke of Buckingham lost the merit he might have pretended to, and brought over a mistress whom his strange conduct threw into the hands of his enemies. The King was presently taken with her. She studied to please and observe him in everything; so that he passed away the rest of his life in a great fondness for her. He kept her at a vast charge; and she, by many fits of sickness, some believed real, and others thought only pretended, gained from him everything she desired. She stuck firm to the French interest, and was its chief support. The King divided himself between her and Mistress Gwyn, and had for a time no other avowed amour. But he was so entirely possessed by the Duchess of Portsmouth, and so engaged by her in the French interest, that this threw him into great difficulties, and exposed him to much contempt and distrust.'

According to the records of the Heralds' College, Charles Lennox was born on July 29, 1672, and, 'being of great

hopes,' when only three years old was enrolled among the peers both of England and of Scotland as Duke of Richmond, and also Duke of Lennox. The King, who was present at his baptism, gave him the surname of Lennox, and his own Christian name, Charles.

At nine years old the precocious child was invested with the blue riband of the Order of the Garter, and while still in his minority succeeded the Duke of Monmouth as Master of the Horse, the duty being performed by commissioners, while he of course drew his salary like the other courtiers around him. On the death of his father, however, he was removed from this post by James II., on account of the share which had been taken by his mother in promoting the Bill of Exclusion.

Stuart as he was paternally, the Duke afterwards acted as aide-de-camp to King William in Flanders, and also held some appointments about the Hanoverian household of George I.; so that we cannot suppose that he was much troubled with scruples on the score of loyalty, or of royalty either, or put any very wide construction on the commandment which bids us 'Honour our father.' His mother, Louise de Querouaille, meantime had been created Duchess of Portsmouth for life and also by Louis XIV. Duchess of Aubigny in France, a title then recently extinct by the death of the last Duke of Richmond of the Stuart line in 1672.

Letters patent were passed in 1673 by the King of France, granting to the Duchess of Portsmouth the territory of Aubigny in the province of Berri, in which it was set forth that, 'considering the great extent of the said territories, consisting of the town of Aubigny, two considerable castles, two parishes and fiefs, extending eight leagues, with the privilege of resorting to the court and Parliament of Paris, she being likewise mistress of the waters, forests, fairs, markets, and all places in the said territories; therefore he unites, creates, and erects the said town, territory, castellany, and castle of Aubigny, fiefs, and lands, &c., into a duchy and peerdom of

France,' by the name, title, and dignity of Dukes of Aubigny and Peers of France.[1]

His Majesty King Charles, considering with what lustre and glory the House of Lennox had shone in former times, and that by the death of Charles Stuart, Duke of Richmond and Lennox, the dignity of Duke of Lennox was merged in the Crown, therefore, that the honour might be again revived, bestowed the estate of Lennox on his young son, whom he had just created Duke of Richmond ; and by letters patent, passed in Scotland in the following month, the latter was created Duke of Lennox, Earl of Darnley, and Baron Methuen of Torbolton, in the peerage of that kingdom.

It was, no doubt, King Charles's fondness for this boy that led him to enrich so lavishly his French mother, of whom we know little to her advantage, except—what possibly might atone in the eyes of some writers for many moral delinquencies —the fact that she was a 'fascinating' woman, and that 'her splendour and magnificence contributed in no small degree to many of the Court entertainments of the time.' So lavish, indeed, was the King's expenditure upon her that Evelyn tells us in his 'Diary' that the plate and furniture of even Charles's Queen were but those of a private lady in comparison with those of the Duchess of Portsmouth's establishment. He writes, under date January 24, 1682 :—

'I was at the entertainment of the Morocco Ambassador at the Duchess of Portsmouth's glorious apartments at Whitehall, where was a great banquet of sweetmeats and music. Both the Ambassador and his retinue behaved themselves with extraordinary moderation and modesty, though placed about a long table, a lady between two Moors, and amongst these the King's natural children, viz. Lady Litchfield and Sussex, the Duchess of Portsmouth, Nelly Gwyn, &c. . . . as splendid as jewels and excess of bravery could make them. The Moors,

[1] The dukedom of Aubigny in France still nominally belongs to his Grace the Duke of Richmond; but the first French Revolution swept away all the then Duke's feudal rights over the territory of Aubigny, so that it is now a mere name and shadow.

neither admiring, nor seeming to regard anything, furniture or the like, with any earnestness, but only decently tasting the banquet, drank a little milk and water, and also of a sorbet and jacolet, but not a drop of wine. They did not look about, or stare at the ladies, or express the least surprise, but, with a courtly negligence in pace, countenance, and whole behaviour, answering only to such questions as were asked, with a great deal of wit and gallantry ; and gravely took their leave with this compliment, that God would bless the Duchess of Portsmouth and the young Prince, her son, meaning the little Duke of Richmond.'

The estimate of rank formed by the Moors, although erroneous in fact, was not uncountenanced by circumstances, the Duchess, according to Burnet, being urged by her party to join the movement for excluding the Duke of York from the throne, in expectation of a declaration in favour of her son. After the Stuart titles were, with a slight variation, all revived in the person of his Grace, his example was selected by the King to remodel in part the costume of the most noble Order of the Garter, of which, though only nine years of age, he had been created a Knight in 1681. 'At that time and previously, as pictures show, the Knights of the Garter wore the ribbon round the neck, with the "George" appendant on the breast ; but the Duke's mother having some time after his installation introduced him to the King with his ribbon over his left shoulder and the "George" appendant on the right side, his Majesty was so pleased with the conceit that he commanded all the Knights Companions of the Order to wear it the same way.' The first Duke, dying in 1723, was succeeded by his son Charles, who was a lieutenant-general in the army, and also an aide-de-camp to the King, and at his Majesty's coronation was High Constable of England for the day. His Grace held a command under George II. at the battle of Dettingen. He had been declared one of the lords justices of the kingdom before his Majesty's departure, and held that post in 1745, when Bonnie Prince Charlie, having landed in Scotland, ad-

vanced as far south as Derby. On this occasion his Grace attended the Duke of Cumberland in his expedition against the insurgents, and assisted in the reduction of Carlisle.

It may be mentioned here that one of the daughters of this (second) Duke was the Lady Sarah Lennox, so celebrated in the history of the last century as one of the early flames of King George III., who no doubt would have married her if it had not been a tradition of Hanoverian royalty—a tradition which he afterwards raised into a law—to maintain the family as a caste, and not to allow of marriages of its members with subjects of the Crown. I can easily fancy what must have been Lady Sarah's feelings when, in September 1761, as one of her bridesmaids, she supported the train of Queen Charlotte at her marriage with the King, whose consort she had been so nearly becoming only a few months previously. In all probability she was really in love with his Majesty; for, though in the following year she married Sir Thomas Charles Bunbury, the marriage ended in a divorce, and she ultimately married one of the Napiers.

The third Duke, who succeeded to these titles in 1750, was known both as a soldier and a statesman, being successively a Secretary of State, Master-General of the Ordnance, and a field-marshal in the army. His name also ought to be held in honour for certain lasting benefits which he conferred on art and artists in this country. He was one of the earliest members and one of the most active promoters of the society for the encouragement of the arts, when as yet such trivial subjects had not attracted the attention of our Hanoverian kings; and he showed the reality of his goodwill towards artists in general by opening his house in Spring Gardens, and afterwards in Whitehall, in 1758—before the foundation of the Royal Academy—as a gallery for the display of paintings annually during the London season. In fact, it may be said with confidence that his town mansion was the cradle of the Royal Academy, his gallery being open to all students above the age of twelve, to whom he awarded premiums in money

and other prizes for their best productions. It is strange, considering that the Duke lived nearly six years into the present century, that his Grace's name is so thoroughly forgotten from among the roll of our public benefactors and philanthropists; and it will be a great pleasure to me if this present sketch should serve to remind only a few members of the artist-world of his Grace's good deeds. If a Scotchman has good reason occasionally to cry out 'God bless the Duke of Argyll,' for reasons best known north of the Tweed, surely our R.A.'s and A.R.A.'s and students of the Academy in Trafalgar Square may now and then use a like exclamation in remembrance of Charles, third Duke of Richmond, Lennox, and Aubigny.

It was this duke whose great unpopularity as a member of the Government is recorded by Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall. His enemies accused him of domestic parsimony, which they contrasted in no measured terms with his profusion of the public money as Master-General of the Ordnance. If his gallery was open to students, his kitchen, it was said, both at Goodwood and in Whitehall, was the coolest apartment in his house, and 'his kitchen chimney never smoked'—a fact which is commemorated in the 'Rolliad.' His passion for spending money on fortifications and works which he projected to defend our great naval arsenals from invasion more than once excited the attention of Parliament, and in 1785 caused fierce attacks in the House, which it cost the young Minister, William Pitt, infinite trouble to parry. Pitt, however, gallantly stood by the Duke, declaring that his ability, experience, and systematic economy had been one of the principal causes which had secured for his own administration so large a share of the popular favour.

His Grace having left no issue, these titles passed at his death to his nephew, Charles, general in the army, at one time Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and afterwards Governor-General of Canada, whose melancholy death at Montreal in 1819, from the bite of a tame fox, was universally lamented both in

Canada and in England, where his genial frankness and urbanity had made him a general favourite.

He married Lady Charlotte Gordon, sister and heiress of the last Duke of Gordon. By this alliance the magnificent estate of Gordon Castle, in Banffshire, with a rent-roll of 50,000*l.*, was added to the estates of the family, who now bear the name of Gordon-Lennox.

This duke's eldest son and successor, the late Duke, was an aide-de-camp to the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, and held office under Lord Grey as Postmaster-General in 1830–34, with a seat in the Cabinet. From this, however, he seceded, along with Lord Ripon, Lord Stanley, and Sir James Graham, on account of the measures of the Whig administration with respect to the Irish Church. His Grace was a zealous agriculturist, and was one of the founders of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, of which society he was a trustee. Both on his large domains in Sussex and in Scotland he was revered by his tenants as one of the best of landlords. The Duke was one of the princely supporters of the turf, the annual races at Goodwood Park affording scope for the display of his generous hospitality. By his honourable bearing and frank manners on all occasions he had endeared himself to a large circle of friends, who will never fail to cherish his memory.

The present Duke of Richmond has also taken a prominent part in public affairs, and was President of the Poor Law Board under Lord Derby's second Administration. Subsequently his Grace held the offices of President of the Board of Trade and Lord President of the Council ; and at one time, by the common consent of all sections of his party, he was the recognised leader of the Conservatives in the Upper House. It was, therefore, by no means surprising that he should have obtained a renewal in his favour of the title of Duke of Gordon, of Gordon Castle, Scotland.

Considering the close affinity which exists between the House of Lennox and royalty, and the existence of a royal

palace on the banks of the Thames at Richmond, it might naturally be supposed that it is the latter place from which his Grace derives his ducal title. Such, however, is not the case, the name, style, and title by which his ancestor was raised to the peerage being Duke of Richmond, of Richmondshire, in the county of York, the castle of which, along with the surrounding lands, belonged to the Earls of Richmond of the line of De Dreux, until they fell to the Crown upon the accession of Henry, Earl of Richmond, to the throne as Henry VII. The ruins of the castle, as most of my readers who have visited Yorkshire know, rise proudly and majestically above the side of the river Swale, the bold Norman keep being still almost entire; and the castle, though untenanted, or used only as a military store, is still the property of the noble duke who derives from it the first of his many titles.

It may be added that Richmond in Surrey was originally called Shene, for its 'bright' and pleasant situation; and that its modern name of Richmond was given to it out of compliment to Henry VII. when he built a palace there and made it a royal residence.

GEORGE HANGER, LORD COLERAINE

'March 31.—Died of a convulsive fit, at his residence, near the Regent's Park, aged 73, the Right Hon. George Hanger, fourth Lord Coleraine, of Coleraine, co. Londonderry, in the peerage of Ireland, and a major-general in the army; better known by the title of Colonel Hanger, or the familiar appellation of "George Hanger."' Such is the curt and brief manner in which Mr. 'Sylvanus Urban' records in the column of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in 1824, the decease of a nobleman who had played in his day a conspicuous part among the early boon companions of George, Prince of Wales, of whom he was wittily said to be not the constant *Hanger*, but the constant 'Hanger-on.' Like Lord Rochester and Lord Camelford before him, he lived a life not very creditable to a member

of 'the upper ten thousand,' and died lamented and regretted by none, or at all events by few, of his contemporaries; and the extinction of his title, which was caused by his death, could scarcely be said to have created in the Irish peerage any gap or void which it was difficult to fill up.

The life of this *mauvais sujet*, however, though not such as to place him among the true aristocracy—the *viri optimè meriti*—may well entitle him to a place among the 'Eccentric Characters' of the nineteenth century; and as such I fancy that a brief outline of his life may possibly amuse my readers, and serve as a beacon of warning to young (and possibly also middle-aged) noblemen with more money than brains.

The family from which the hero of the present paper sprang does not seem to be in any way illustrious in history. George Hanger expressly says that he could not trace it up beyond his grandfather, whom he styles Sir George, 'though how he got the title he knew not, and cared less.' All that is known about the family is that the name borne by its members was variously spelt at different times as Ainger, Aunger, Aungre, and Aungrier; and it is probable that the 'h' was prefixed by some of the family whose spelling and pronunciation were alike at fault. The name of Hanger, however, is not quite unknown to fame, for in the British Museum Library there is a book published in 1685, by one Philip Hanger, entitled 'A True Relation how Eighteen Men were Cast Away at Sea, with the great hardships they underwent.' It is therefore quite possible that the love of strange adventure was not original in my hero George, but simply broke out afresh, as being already 'in the blood.' I may add that in the present day a West End firm of tailors, Messrs. Hanger and Sons, appear in the British Museum Catalogue as the authors of 'An Infallible Guide in Cutting Clothes.' Can they be any relations of Lord Coleraine? But, however the name was or ought to have been spelt, the 'Extinct Peerage of Ireland' says that the Hangers came from Essex and Hertfordshire, but that they 'disposed of their English estates

towards the end of the fifteenth century.' Francis Aunger or Ainger, one of the younger sons of the House, appears to have gone over to Ireland in the reign of Elizabeth, like many another English gentleman, to seek his fortune. He chose the profession of the law, became Master of the Rolls, and was raised to a peerage as Earl of Longford and Baron Aungier; these titles, however, became extinct in 1704. Another member of the same House, probably his brother, followed the trade of a Turkey merchant, either in London or in Dublin—it is not clear which—and, having got together a good round sum of money, made up his mind to look out for an heiress, so as to consolidate and perpetuate at once his wealth and his name. He purchased the estate of Driffield, in Gloucestershire, where the Hangers continued to live till the close of the last century. His son or grandson, George Hanger of Driffield, Governor of the Bank of England in its earlier days, was the father of Sir George Hanger mentioned above, who received the honour of knighthood from King William III. This gentleman had three sons, of whom the third, Gabriel by name, happening to go over to Ireland to visit his cousins, took a fancy to that island, where he contrived to marry a rich wife—Elizabeth, only daughter and heiress of one Richard Bond, 'of Cowbury, in Herefordshire, and of the province of Ulster.' In noticing his family in the account of his own eccentric 'Life and Adventures' which he published in 1802, the son of this union, George Hanger, thus speaks of his father: 'His sister, Miss Anne Hanger, was married to Hare, Lord Coleraine; but my father was not in the most distant degree related to his lordship, or connected with him except by that marriage. Lord Coleraine, however, happening to die at the very nick of time without issue or heir to his coronet, my father claimed it, with just as much right as the clerk or sexton of the parish.' Unfortunately, however, for George Hanger's reputation as a family chronicler, the title was not revived in his father's favour till 1762, two years after the accession of George III.

The ex-Turkey merchant, however, was enjoying his gold-won honours and living at his seat in Gloucestershire, in 1751, when his third and youngest son George—whose life chiefly concerns me—first saw the light of day. He had two elder brothers, both of whom held the title before it descended to himself. His first experience of school life was at Reading; but the school did not prove at all to his taste, for he describes his master as 'a brute, a tyrant, and a savage.' Of the school to which he was next sent—kept by the Rev. Mr. Fountain at Marylebone Park—he had a different tale to tell, for he was treated with kindness and attention. His love of mischief, however, began to display itself here, for he violently kicked on the shins the dentist who attended the school, and caught his thumb between his teeth on his endeavouring to operate on him a second time. He was next sent to Eton, where, though he got on with Latin, he set himself entirely against Greek. On rising high in the school he gave himself up to field sports. After leaving Eton he entered the army as an ensign in the Foot Guards, and devoted a year to the study of mathematics, fortification, and the German language at the University of Göttingen. The next two summers he spent desultorily in Hanover and Hesse Cassel, where he became acquainted with many 'persons of distinction,' from whom, however, he appears to have derived few or no good lessons in morals. Soon after his return to England he met with an adventure which narrowly escaped having a fatal issue. One fine Sunday evening he was walking with a friend and two ladies in a side path of the gardens close to Kensington Palace, where thick yew trees edged the walks, when a man approached the party in a menacing attitude. His approach was prevented by George Hanger: the fellow then put his hand on his sword, at the same time showing plainly that he knew well enough how to use that weapon; but George Hanger warned the stranger to retreat if he did not wish to be run through; so the man made off, and George and his friends brought their walk and talk to an end, without any

further difficulty. He himself owns, in his account of the matter, that, though he had been placed in many disagreeable situations in life, he had never been so alarmed as on that occasion.

George Hanger spent the next few years in gaiety and dissipation in town; and then, on account of a fancied wrong with regard to his promotion, he left the Guards in dudgeon and threw up his commission. However, in spite of this silly and wayward act, as soon as the first flames of the war of revolution were kindled in America, he applied for and obtained an appointment in one of the Hessian corps, then being raised for the British service in America, and took rank as a captain in the Landgrave of Hesse's corps of Jägers. But before his departure for America he had got into difficulties from his personal extravagance, and the shadows of a future day of reckoning were already crossing his path.

He saw some active service in his new post, and obtained the rank of major in the British Legion ; but, falling a victim to the yellow fever on his advance under Lord Cornwallis into North Carolina, for a long time he lay between life and death, being reduced almost to a skeleton. Death, however, was not allowed to claim him as a victim just yet.

He left America on the conclusion of peace, and was enabled to return to England by the help of a friend, Mr. Richard Tattersall, who offered him a home in his house, promising to make his presence in London again possible by paying any debts that he was himself unable to meet.

In the autobiographical work already alluded to, Major Hanger has given an amusing description of the scenes at a contested election for Westminster which he witnessed at this time, and in which he took an active part ; and he points out the many qualities of familiarity and condescension which a gentleman must needs have possessed under the old system now replaced by the ballot, if he wished to be of any service to his party.

It was at this time that Major Hanger became one of the

jovial associates of the then Prince of Wales, who made him one of his equerries, with a salary of 300*l.* a year, an appointment which, together with employment which he undertook of raising recruits for the East India Company, afforded him the means of living for a time like a gentleman. His good fortune did not, however, last long, and the Major was soon on the high road to the King's Bench, which he entered in June, 1798. He spent about ten months in 'those blessed regions of rural retirement,' as he jokingly styles his prison, possibly remembering the lines of Lovelace :

> Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage;
> Minds innocent and peaceful take
> That for a hermitage;

and he declares that he 'lived there as a gentleman on three shillings a day.' Released from prison, he now applied for employment on active service, but in vain ; so he formed the resolution of taking to trade, and set up at one time as a coal merchant, and at another as a dealer in powder for the special purpose of setting razors. Specimens of this powder he carried about in his pocket to show to 'persons of quality,' whom he canvassed for their patronage ! How far he flourished in the coal business we do not hear ; but, as he mentions a kind friend who gave him a salary sufficient to keep the wolf from the door, in all probability he did not make one of those gigantic fortunes which the coal owners and coal merchants are in the habit of realising nowadays at the cost of the long-suffering British householder.

We read in the notice already referred to in the *Gentleman's Magazine* that the Colonel (for he had now attained that grade), 'though free in his manners, was never inclined to give intentional offence, and the peculiarity of those manners precluded all idea of resentment, and laughter rather than anger was the result of his most extravagant sallies.' This sounds strange indeed to those who know that he still enjoys by tradition the fame of a noted 'bruiser,' and that he

was one of the most constant and zealous patrons of the cock-pit, and of all those places where the noble art of self-defence was practically illustrated. Though he spent so much time among low society and in not very choice amusements, we are told that he found time for reading, and was 'never wanting in rational conversation on the topics of the day.'

George Hanger was quite as averse to assume the title of 'Lord Coleraine,' which came to him on the death of his elder brother William at the close of 1814, as Horace Walpole was to call himself Earl of Orford. In fact he scarcely ever signed his name by his new designation.

George Hanger lived and died unmarried—at all events, no legal marriage stands scored against his name in the existing peerages. He seems, however, to have contracted in early life a quasi-matrimonial union with one of the gipsy tribe whom he met by chance in the southern suburbs of London, and whom he mentions in his 'Autobiography' as 'the lovely Egyptia.' He writes, 'I used to listen with raptures to the melody of her voice. . . . I thought her the "Pamela" of Norwood, the paragon of her race, the Hester of the nineteenth century · but, alas! on my return after a short absence one day I found that she had gone off with a travelling tinker of a neighbouring tribe, who wandered about the country mending pots and kettles.'

According to the tell-tale catalogue of the British Museum Library, Lord Coleraine was the author of several other works besides his own 'Autobiography.' Among these I may mention here an octavo pamphlet, published in 1795, entitled 'Military Reflections on the Attack and Defence of the City of London ; to which is (? are) added Reflections on the Loss of Plymouth or Harwich,' and including general remarks on the whole island. Returning to the same subject nine or ten years later, I find him issuing from the press another alarmist pamphlet: 'Reflections on the Menaced Invasion, and the Means of Protecting the Capital; with a letter on the proposed fortifications round London, and a defence of the volun-

teer system.' The volunteer movement, which has been so successfully revived in our own day, had no more zealous and active advocate than Col. Hanger at the commencement of the present century. And it was with reference to this subject that in 1808 he published 'A letter to Lord Castlereagh, proving how 15,000 men, well disciplined, may be acquired in the short space of two months; with instructions to the volunteers; to which is added a plan for the formation of a corps of consolidated marksmen.'

It is clear from what I have said above that Lord Coleraine cared little or nothing about 'blue blood' and pedigree, and that he valued a man rather by his skill with his fists or his rapier than by his descent from the Plantagenets. Thus he commences his 'Autobiography' with a portrait of himself swinging on a gallows, apparently at Tyburn, in allusion to his name; and it is said that this is the only authentic portrait of him now extant. Still, every now and then something of ancestral pride peeps out in spite of himself in what he writes, as, for instance, when he tells us that his father was 'an honest M.P. in favour of the King and the constitution, and above a bribe'—even in the days of Sir Robert Walpole. His summary of his wide experience of life in every phase and in all grades tells us that he had lived with men and women of every rank, from the highest to the lowest—'from St. James's to St. Giles's'—from the drawing-room to the dust-cart—in palaces and in night cellars; and it is probable that few persons besides himself had seen and could describe from personal experience at once the gilded *salons* of Carlton House and the lowest purlieus of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields. His 'Autobiography' is full of drollery, much of which I could not possibly transfer to these pages: but I shall never forget his sketches of the old tyrant at Reading School, with his 'long rattan cane,' and of the rebellion at Eton in the time of Dr. Foster, in which he bore a part. At Eton, however, his education appears to have been sadly neglected; for he tells us that at eighteen his only reading was 'the newspaper and the

Sporting Calendar,' though here and there some traces of the scholar peep out in the Latin quotations that occur in his autobiographical sketch; and he has the grace to own that during his three years' stay in Germany he felt the great want of the refining influence of ladies' society. He could not certainly be altogether a 'rough,' if it be true that while at Hanover he was much noticed by Prince Charles, the brother of our own Queen Charlotte, and that in consequence he grew to be on such terms with the Hanoverian Guards as to be allowed to take part with them in their military exercises on field-days. Nor does he appear to have been well or kindly treated by his father in more ways than one. At all events, on one occasion, when he wished to join the army of Count Romanzoff, and to volunteer for service to fight against the Turks, old Lord Coleraine would not find the money for equipment, so he was obliged to stay in Germany biting his thumbs and cursing his adverse fate; and he complains that, through the niggardly parsimony of his parent and his elder brother, he was twice deprived of his earnings, and forced to begin the world over again.

I have mentioned already that at one time George Hanger tried to 'make both ends meet' by recruiting for the East India Company, and at another by starting as a coal merchant. He tells us that he spent 500*l.*—'costs out of pocket,' as the lawyers say—in establishing and organising agencies for recruits in all the large towns of England, but that an end was put to this work by a dispute among the directors in Leadenhall Street as to the best place for recruiting barracks. The decision, wherever it placed the depôt, threw him out of employ, robbed him of his 500*l.* and six years' labour, and lost him an income of 600*l.* a year. The result was that he spent nearly a year in the King's Bench Prison (June, 1798, to April, 1799), and had to start afresh with a capital of 40*l.* in hand! No wonder that next year he thought of trade in earnest as a better chance than such precarious work. With reference to this subject he writes in May, 1800, to a friend,

who told him that it was reported that he allowed himself to be paid by a commission on such coals as he could sell : 'On my honour, the report is false, absolutely false ! I am allowed an annual salary, which will keep me from want. May the black diamond trade flourish with me ! '

Carbones . . . . nigri
Sunt mihi deliciæ ; sint mihi divitiæ !

It is astonishing to see how much of worldly wisdom and what the Americans call ''cuteness' is to be found in George Hanger's 'Autobiography.' He had no great respect for parsons, or indeed, I fear, it must be added, for religion in any shape ; but scattered up and down his two volumes are to be found many useful hints as to the necessity of purging the theatres of vice and the encouragement of street-preaching, if the morals of the populace were to be improved, mixed up with all sorts of droll suggestions as to the best way of putting down those very amusements in which he himself excelled, and those exhibitions of which he was the especial patron ! Among other matters he showed his humour by proposing to levy a tax on the absentee landlords, not of Ireland, but of Scotland ; and another on the superfluous luxuries of forks and spoons.

As might be expected, George Hanger, with all his eccentricity, made a capital soldier of fortune. Sir Henry Clinton, on meeting him in America, seems to have felt this, and so not only gave him a command in the expedition for the reduction of the southern provinces, but made him his aide-de-camp at the siege of Charleston. He also distinguished himself in the operations at Savannah, and after the capture of Charleston he was appointed inspector of volunteers, as well as of cattle, horses, and stores, being promoted also to a majority in the British Legion. Whilst serving in Carolina, under Lord Cornwallis, the yellow fever (as mentioned above) reduced him so low that 'his bones were coming through his skin ;' but he escaped the jaws of death, and lived to meet

Lord Cornwallis some years later at dinner in St. James's Square. His illness on this occasion stood him in good stead; for, being sent on a cruise to Bermuda, he escaped being taken prisoner along with his general. He subsequently sailed for New York with Sir Henry Clinton in the hope of relieving Lord Cornwallis, but arrived three days too late to effect that object.

That he used his eyes and 'all his seven senses' whilst in America is shown by the fact that even in 1802 he prophesied that a day would come when the Northern and Southern States would be brought into conflict, and that the war, whenever it arose, would not be a 'little war.' He was right in this view; and probably he was the first to hold it, or, at all events, to express it publicly.

Such a man, with all his faults and failings, could not have been wholly bad; and therefore I am not surprised to find that when false charges were brought against his honour as a man and a soldier, not only Mr. Tattersall, but even the Prince of Wales, thought proper to come forward and stand as his friend. The same is the inference which I draw from a fact recorded by himself, that he visited in his cell in Newgate more than one highwayman whom he thought too severely punished, and even rode behind the tail of the cart which carried him up Holborn Hill and along Oxford Street to Tyburn. His goodness of heart, too, is proved by the following assertion which he made to a friend who wished to see him chosen a member of Parliament: 'I pledge myself, if ever I should have the honour of a seat in the House of Commons, to consult with some of the leading men in this country in order to bring in a bill for the better protection of women.'

From first to last it would seem as if constant misfortune and disappointment had worked a change in his temper, and almost in his very nature. For instance, he tells us that he had expectations from the Duchess of St. Albans, who had been a *protégée* of his father, but that he was baulked of these, being cut out of her will by a certain Mr. Roberts, who, no

doubt, knew how to play his cards with greater skill than himself. Again, what little property he actually inherited was lost through the death of a surveyor whom he was employing ; and the loss of this estate involved him in other difficulties which compelled him to sell out of the army just as the American war broke out, and in the long run to play the undignified *rôle* of a coal-dealer ! His father had gone in early life to India, with 500*l.* in his pocket, and had returned to England with a realised fortune of 25,000*l.*, which was increased by inheriting his brothers' and sisters' fortunes ; but, with all this, his lordship could not find the means to keep his son afloat in the service, and even allowed him to be robbed and ruined without putting forth a hand to aid him. Can it be a matter of wonder to anyone that such an individual, however good he might have been by natural disposition, was soured and embittered, and driven into irregular courses, and at last came to boast that 'he cared not whether he was a nobleman or a gentleman, but one thing he knew, and that was that he was *a dead shot* ?' In the days of duelling such words as these meant a great deal. Holding such sentiments, it was fortunate for him that he did not meet with the fate of Lord Camelford, and fall a victim in an 'affair of honour.'

DE COURCY, LORD OF KINGSALE

First on the roll of the Irish peerage, occupying the same position as is held by Lord De Ros in England and Lord Forbes in Scotland, stands the proud name of John Fitzroy de Courcy, thirty-first Baron Kingsale. It is not everyone of whom it can be said that he can trace back his family to the roll of the battlefield of Hastings, but the family of De Courcy can truly claim that honour ; and even more than this, if we may believe the heralds and genealogists. The De Courcies can boast alliance in the paternal line through the Dukes of

Lorraine, and maternally through the Dukes of Normandy, with several of the royal houses of Europe. The head and representative of the De Courcy family, moreover, enjoys the hereditary and singular privilege of standing with his head covered in the presence of royalty. The origin of this honour I shall now relate.

To revert to the early history of this family, it appears that Richard de Courcy, eldest son of Robert, Lord of Courcy in Normandy, accompanied his sovereign William on his invasion of England ; and, for his distinguished services at the battle of Hastings, was enriched with considerable grants of lands and lordships, among which was that of Stoke—thence called Stoke Courcy in the county of Somerset. His immediate descendants were in high position at Court ; and one Robert de Courcy was present at the battle of Northampton in the reign of King Stephen. But John, the great great-grandson of the first baron, was the founder of the chief honours of the family. This nobleman had gained much credit for himself in the wars of Henry II., both in England and Gascony ; and at the instance of that monarch he was sent into Ireland in the year 1177 to assist William Fitz-Adelm in the government of that country. While there he put himself at the head of a few knights and esquires and about three hundred foot soldiers, with whose help he invaded, and after several efforts reduced to submission, the province of Ulster. For this achievement he was rewarded in 1181 with the 'Earldom of Ulster,' being the first Englishman who received an Irish title of honour. In order to make his position more secure, he married a daughter of Godfrey, King of the Isle of Man, and continued to bask in the sunshine of royal favour to the close of Henry II.'s reign, and during that of his successor, Richard I. But envy, as has so often been the case, would not allow him to hold his honours much longer in peace ; for, on the accession of King John to the throne of England, Hugh de Lacie, governor of Ireland, caused the Earl to be treacherously seized while, alone and quite unarmed,

he was doing penance in the churchyard of Downpatrick, on Good Friday of the year 1203. He was sent to England under a guard, and condemned by the King to perpetual imprisonment in the Tower, while his earldom and estates were given over to his successful rival. He had been in confinement about a year, when a dispute which had arisen between King John of England and Philip Augustus of France with regard to their several pretensions to the Duchy of Normandy, was by agreement referred to the decision of a single combat. King John had somewhat too hastily appointed a day for this contest to come off, and the King of France had his champion ready ; while John, who could find no one of his subjects willing to take up the gauntlet, was forced to appeal to his prisoner, the degraded Earl of Ulster, who accepted the challenge, though only on a third request, 'for the honour of his country.'

Such is the common story as told in the Peerages ; but the records of the Tower affirm that the Earl had surrendered himself and given hostages for his appearance, and was kept by the King in the Tower to be in readiness for the day appointed for the combat. The contest, however, whichever way the matter stood, never came off, for the French champion showed flight instead of fight on the first appearance of his powerful antagonist ; and on the trumpet sounding for the attack set spurs to his horse, broke through the lists, and gained the seashore, whence he reached the coast of France or Spain, and thus left the champion of England victor on the field. The French King, however, who had heard of the Earl's great strength, desired to see some proof of it ; whereupon, as the story goes, a massive coat of mail with a full-faced helmet on the top was placed on a block. With a single blow the Earl cleft asunder the armour and helmet ; and it is said that the sword was fixed so deep into the wood that no one else present could draw it out, though he himself did so with one hand. The armour and sword used on this remarkable occasion are still preserved in the Tower of London. King

John was so astonished at this extraordinary exhibition of strength, that he restored De Courcy to his titles and estates, and in addition desired him to ask any favour at his hands which it was in his power to grant, and it should be given The Earl replied that 'he had titles and estates enough, but desired that he and his successors might have the privilege, as soon as their first obeisance had been paid, of being covered in the presence of him and his successors, Kings of England;' and the request was granted accordingly.

De Courcy, however, was disappointed in his endeavours to obtain the re-establishment of his earldom and other rights in Ireland; for though he made, it is said, fifteen attempts to cross the Channel, he never put foot on Irish soil again, and he eventually retired to France, where he died about the year 1210.

He was succeeded by his only son, Miles, who in vain endeavoured, in his turn, to secure his rights in Ireland, Hugh de Lacie maintaining that he himself had a right to the Earldom of Ulster. Earl John had never returned to make his claim in person; and so, considering that Hugh's power in Ireland and his favour at Court were too great to be resisted, Miles gave up his claim, and received from the King, in compensation, the Barony of Kingsale, in Ireland, in 1223. From him the family honours descended regularly for five centuries. The seventh Lord, Miles de Courcy, sat in Parliament in 1339 as premier baron, and distinguished himself in a battle near Ringrone, when he overthrew Florence MacCarthy-More, driving his soldiers into the river at Bandon.

William, the ninth baron, appears to have been the first to receive a confirmation of the honours of Kingsale and Ringrone at the hands of King Richard II.; he, moreover, obtained a grant of 100*l.* per annum out of the royal exchequer, with leave to purchase and own a ship, and to pass and repass between England and France whenever he pleased to travel.

Fortune, however, was again in some degree adverse in the

lifetime of the eleventh baron, Patrick, who was driven from his castle of Kilbrittain by MacCarthy Reagh—an exploit which, with others of the same kind, was rendered comparatively easy for the Irish on account of the absence of many landowners from Ireland during the wars of the Houses of York and Lancaster.

Trouble again came upon James, the thirteenth Baron, who, after abetting the adventurer and impostor Lambert Simnel in Ireland, refused to take the oath of allegiance before Sir Richard Edgecombe, the deputy of King Henry VII., while he was afloat in Kingsale Harbour. Sir Richard landed, and homage was then duly performed by Lord Kingsale with the rest of his townsmen in the chancel of Kingsale Church. The recalcitrant Irish lords were afterwards summoned to appear before the King at Greenwich, where they were reproved, but pardoned. Lord Kingsale, however, was absent when the rest went with the King in a solemn procession to church ; he was thereupon deprived of his rank as premier baron, which was bestowed by the royal pique on Lord Athenry, a strong Lancastrian—Lord Kingsale being a thorough Yorkist. In the Parliament which met at Dublin in 1427 he was placed on the roll after Lord Athenry ; but since that peerage is now, if not extinct, at least in abeyance, Lord Kingsale again stands, as I have said, without dispute first among the Irish barons.

A fresh honour accrued to this noble House in the person of Gerald, seventeenth baron, who was made a 'knight banneret' by King Henry VIII., under the royal standard, at Boulogne. His second cousin and successor, John, gained distinction in fighting against the Spaniards at the siege of Kingsale in 1601, and was in high favour at the Court of King James I. During the time of this lord there was a contest regarding the title of Kingsale, which was bestowed as a Viscountcy on Sir Dominic Sarsfield, but was afterwards exchanged for that of Kilmallock, the Privy Council stating in their report in 1627 that Lord Kingsale was possessed by ancient evidences of the titles of Courcy, Kingsale, and Ring-

rone ; and it may be added that De Courcy appears now for the first time as a parliamentary title. Nothing remarkable seems to have occurred till during the lifetime of Almericus, the twenty-third baron, who was in high favour at the Court of King Charles II. and James II., and received a pension from both ; he was, however, outlawed in 1690 for his military services under the banner of the latter, but was received back in the following year, when, as we read in Sharpe's Peerage, 'he was enabled to repair to the presence chamber of King William with his hat on his head, to the great surprise of his Majesty. On being required by one of the lords in waiting to explain his conduct, he replied that he very well knew in whose presence he stood, and that the reason why he then wore his hat was because he stood before the King of England, and, approaching the throne, addressed the King : "May it please your Majesty, my name is Courcy, and I am Lord of Kingsale, in your kingdom of Ireland. The reason of my appearing covered in your Majesty's presence is to assert the ancient privilege of my family, granted to Sir John de Courcy, Earl of Ulster, and his heirs, by John, King of England, to him and his successors for ever." The King said he recollected he had such a nobleman, recognised the privilege, and gave him his hand to kiss ; his lordship thereupon paid his obeisance and remained covered.'

His successor, Gerald, asserted the same family privilege before King George I., and again at the Court of George II.—most probably at a Drawing Room, for it is recorded that the good-natured King addressed him on that occasion in terms of reproof, saying, 'My lord, although you have the privilege of wearing your hat before me, you have no such right to wear it in the presence of ladies.' Lord Kingsale took the reproach kindly, as it was meant, and at once bared his head—so, at least, the story goes, and I merely tell it as it was told to me.

It is reported that John, the twenty-fifth lord, in his turn asserted and exercised his privilege at St. James's or at

Kensington Palace in the early part of George III., but I have never heard that the claim has been repeated within the last hundred years ; and as to the present Lord Kingsale I very much doubt whether he will attempt to act upon his privilege in the presence of a female sovereign. All that I can say is that, if his lordship should ever do so while Queen Victoria is on the throne, he will prove himself far less of a good courtier than I take him to be. When Albert Edward I. holds his first levée in his own name at St. James's—at a day which I trust is far distant as yet –then will be the time for Lord Kingsale to reassert his hereditary right, and no doubt he will find it acknowledged.

A curious episode occurred a little over a hundred years ago at the time of the death of Gerald, the twenty-fourth baron, and the affair seemed at one time likely to assume the form of a trial at law, which, if it had not equalled in length the Tichborne trial of our own time, would perhaps have rivalled the great Shrewsbury case, which will be fresh in the memory of many of my readers. The facts of the case may be found mentioned at length in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of June, 1760. It appears that it was understood that the late Lord Kingsale died without leaving male issue, bequeathing his property to his three daughters ; whereupon a paragraph appeared in *Faulkner's Journal*, signed 'Charles Bernard,' who stated that the title was not extinct, and that the late lord had devised his ancient family estates in Ireland unto one John de Courcy, a native of America, and for many years a common boatman at Portsmouth, as his heir male. This strange announcement was contradicted by the sons-in-law and daughters of the late lord, who affirmed that he had for some years before his death laboured under 'a constant and habitual indisposition of mind,' of which advantage was taken by some evil-disposed adventurer in the neighbourhood to forward his own interests by putting forward an heir, whom he knew to have no right to the succession. This was again alleged to be false by the said Mr. John de Courcy, who took

possession of the baronetcy of Kingsale as twenty-fifth baron —apparently in the *veni, vidi, vici* style. His enemies, it appears, endeavoured to dispossess him, and resorted to force to accomplish their end ; and though Lord Kingsale fled from his own house when, after the true Irish fashion, it was broken into by night, and his wife and children were turned out of doors for the time, still he regained possession by means of the sheriff. Ringrone Castle and the rest of the broad lands in the far south-west of Ireland, which once belonged to the title of Kingsale, have now passed away from the De Courcies, by sale or other transfer ; but, true to his illustrious line of ancestors, the last holder of the title, thirtieth Lord of Kingsale, bought a small property in the south of Devon near Kingsbridge and Modbury, to which he gave the ancient name of Ringrone, no doubt believing in the words of Horace,

Ambiguam tellure nova Salamina futuram.

The present lord is married, but has no children ; and I sincerely hope that some future lord will pick up a stray English heiress with plenty of money, who will reinstate the premier baron of Ireland in the Irish property of the ancient De Courcies.

I should add, for the benefit of such of my readers as have a taste for personal gossip and antiquarian small-talk, that Lord Forester enjoys in England the like privilege to that of Lord Kingsale, having in his possession at his seat in Shropshire the original grant of Henry VIII., conceding to his ancestor, John Forester, of Watling Street, in that county, the right of wearing his hat in the royal presence.

THE HEIRESS OF HADDON HALL

Haddon Hall, viewed architecturally, is one of the most perfect specimens of the ancient baronial mansions of England, and it forms one of the chief attractions of the fair county of

Derbyshire. But even Haddon in the olden time finds its interest enhanced by the well-authenticated tradition, which tells us how, by a romantic attachment and elopement, its picturesque walls and terraces, and the broad lands which surround it, passed from the hands of the Vernons into those of the now ducal house of Manners.

It is well observed of Haddon by Mr. Llewellyn Jewitt, in his 'Illustrated Guide' to that place, that, unlike many of our old baronial residences, its history has been uniformly one of peace and hospitality, not of war and feud and oppression; for that, however much its owners may have been mixed up from time to time in the stirring events of the ages in which they lived, Haddon Hall has never played a part in the turmoils. It has never stood a siege like Wardour Castle or Lathom House; and, though it has been a stronghold in its own way, it has been a stronghold of home and of peaceful domestic life, not of armed troops; and therefore, as it nestles in the woods that crown the banks of the Derwent, it claims an interest peculiarly its own.

We may pass by its early history in a very few lines. At a remote date it was held by the Avenels, by the tenure of knight's service, from whom, towards the close of the twelfth century, it passed by the marriage of an heiress into the hands of Richard de Vernon, a nobleman of Norman extraction, as is implied by his name, which was derived from a lordship and town in Normandy on the banks of the Seine, between Rouen and Paris, of which the family were hereditary lords, bearing the titles of Counts and Barons de Reviers, or Redvers. The direct male descendant of this Richard Vernon, Sir Henry, was made governor to Prince Arthur by Henry VII., with whom he was a great favourite. He married a daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, by whom he had a son, also Sir Henry, high steward of the King's Forest of the Peak under King Henry VIII., a knight whose son, Sir George, the owner of Haddon, was known far and wide through Derbyshire and

the midland counties as 'the King of the Peak.'[1] It is said on good authority that he owned thirty manors in Derbyshire alone, to say nothing of properties in other counties; and by his first wife, a daughter of Sir Gilbert Taylebois or Talbot, he had two daughters, his co-heiresses, the elder of whom married the second son of the then Earl of Derby; while the younger —whose story we are about to tell—became the ancestress of the Earls and Dukes of Rutland. Sir George Vernon was not styled 'King of the Peak' without good cause; for he lived at Haddon in such a style of magnificence and hospitality as was right worthy of a prince, and would put to shame many a German potentate. It is said that he was at once the most generous and the most just of men, and that, although he was given perhaps to undue severity, and inclined to indulge occasionally in a 'Lynch law' of his own throughout 'the Peak,' yet he lived and died in the good esteem of his neighbours. Perhaps, too, his popularity was increased among his friends by the beauty of his two youthful daughters, the Lady Margaret and the Lady Dorothy.

A single tradition, briefly told by Mr. Jewitt in his pleasant pages, will serve to illustrate the firmness and decision of Sir George Vernon's character, and vindicate his title of 'King,' by showing the power which he exercised over the actions, and even over the lives and properties, of the people around him, with whom the good old feudal notions of the laird being able to do pretty well as he pleased with his own dependents were not as yet extinct.

'A pedlar, who had been hawking his wares around the neighbourhood, was one day found murdered in a lonely spot on the estates of Haddon Hall. He had been seen the evening before to enter a cottage in the neighbourhood, and he was never afterwards seen or heard of alive. As soon as the "King

[1] It was Sir John Vernon, the younger brother of this worthy knight, that married the heiress of the Montgomeries, of Sudbury, in Derbyshire, and founded the family of the present Lord Vernon, who still owns landed estates in the neighbourhood of Haddon, which have passed from sire to son.

of the Peak" became aware of the fact that the crime had been committed so near at hand, he had the body of the pedlar removed to Haddon, laid in the hall, and covered with a sheet. He then sent for the cottager to come immediately, and on his arrival at once questioned him as to where the pedlar was who was seen to enter his house the night before. The man denied having seen him, or knowing anything about him, when Sir George uncovered the body before him, ordering that all persons present should touch the body in succession, at the same time declaring their innocence of the murder. The suspected man, when his turn came, declined to touch the body, and instantly rushed out of the hall and made his way, "as fast as his legs could carry him," through Bakewell towards Ashford. Sir George instantly ordered his men to mount and follow him. The murderer was caught in a field opposite the present toll-bar at Ashford, and at once hanged, and the field still bears the name of the "gallows acre," or "galley acre." Sir George is said to have been cited to London for this extraordinary piece of Lynch law, and when he appeared at Court he was summoned twice to surrender as "King of the Peak." To these he made no reply, but the third time he was called on as Sir George Vernon, when he stepped forward and acknowledged himself, "Here am I." Having been summoned as the "King of the Peak," the indictment fell through, and Sir George was admonished and discharged. Sir George Vernon is buried in Bakewell Church, where a remarkably fine and well-preserved altar-tomb bears the recumbent effigies of himself and his two wives.'

But it is time that I passed from Sir George and the dead pedlar to the lady in whom is concentrated the chief interest of my story, Miss Dorothy Vernon, the younger daughter of Sir George, and therefore, we may be sure, known all round Haddon, and Edensor, and Bakewell, and Chatsworth, as a 'Princess of the Peak.'

In or about the year 1567, when Queen Bess had been only nine years on the throne, and when England was still 'merrie

England,' on a bright morning in May the Lady Margaret Vernon was escorted by a bevy of young bridesmaids to the altar of Bakewell Church, and there became the wife of Sir Thomas Stanley, of Winwick, in Lancashire, the second son of Edward, third Earl of Derby, and great-great-grandson of the noble and gallant Stanley who took so brave a part in the battle of Bosworth Field, where he placed the crown of Richard on the head of the victorious Richmond. Dorothy, who was one of the bridesmaids on that day, doubtless found life at Haddon rather lonely after her sister's departure for the North. It is said—but, as there are no cartes-de-visite of the young lady now in existence, it is impossible to verify the assertion—that, of all the beautiful young women of that 'period,' she was the most beautiful ; and, of course, as she had no brothers, she had the best of 'prospects.' The local tradition has it that, in addition to her beauty and wealth, she was blessed with so sweet a temper that she was the idol of all who knew her, far and near. If this, however, really was the case, her monument in Bakewell Church does her but scanty justice, for the sculptor who executed the effigy on her tomb has represented her as neither amiable nor attractive in outward appearance. The story of her life, as told to me by a Derbyshire friend, will have it that she found herself obliged to play the part of Cinderella ; for, while her elder sister was congratulated on all sides for having made a conquest of one of the noble House of Stanley, and becoming his affianced bride was petted and made much of by her fond and indulgent 'papa,' the Lady Dorothy, though only a year or so younger, was kept in the background and treated as a child, when she had got far more than half-way through her 'teens.' This treatment, no doubt, was very unwise in her case, as in that of other young ladies of 'sweet seventeen' ; and the result of course ensued that she resolved to secure a follower for herself. She was fortunate in her choice—John Manners, a son of the Earl of Rutland ; but as he was 'only a younger son,' and had no broad acres to boast of, the attachment was opposed by her

father and her stepmother, and even, we are told, by her sister, who, we hope, was not actuated by any feelings of sisterly jealousy. Dorothy was therefore watched closely, and kept almost a prisoner, being entrusted to the care of a middle-aged *duenna*, who did not contrive to make Haddon Hall the happier by her presence.

Love, however, laughs at locksmiths; and, from the days of Jupiter and Danaë down to our own, there has been a succession of 'Young Lochinvars' in almost every family of high rank and birth.

Julius Cæsar 'came, saw, and conquered,' as we all know from the day when we begin our Delectus; but, unlike that emperor, plain John Manners 'came, saw, and *was* conquered.' It had been a case of love at first sight, and, in spite of the remonstrances of papa and mamma, the young lovers agreed that they would never abandon each other, or unsay the words of love that they had said. These words were destined to have an abiding influence over the proud estates of Haddon Hall—an influence which three centuries have not swept away, for Haddon is now one of the seats, not of the Vernons, but of Dorothy's descendant in the direct line, the Duke of Rutland.

'All things,' they say, 'are fair in love as in war'; and so John Manners is said to have disguised himself as a woodman, or forester, and to have remained in various hiding-places in the woods around Haddon for several weeks, in order to obtain stolen glances of Miss Dorothy, and, no doubt, occasional meetings with her when the *duenna* was not 'on guard.' At length, on one festive night at Haddon, perhaps at one of the merry-makings consequent on her sister's marriage, when everybody was busy in amusing the guests from the neighbourhood, Miss Dorothy is said to have quietly stolen away, unobserved, in the midst of the merriment, and to have passed out of the door of the ante-room on to the garden terrace, which still forms one of the chief features of the hall. She crossed the terrace, ran swiftly down the steps and across the

lawn, and so down to the foot bridge over the Derwent, where she was speedily locked in her lover's arms. Horses, of course, were in waiting with trusty attendants, one of whom was left behind, to put papa off the scent in case of a pursuit.

On and on they rode through the moonlight on that bright August night, and early next morning they were married at a church just across the borders of the county, in Leicestershire.

The door through which the heiress of Haddon eloped on that memorable night with 'plain John Manners' is still always pointed out to all who visit Haddon as 'Dorothy Vernon's door.' It is not enriched with splendid carvings, nor is it to be distinguished from many other doorways in old baronial halls and moated granges; but I fancy that somehow or other his Grace of Rutland can hardly look without some feeling of personal interest on the gate through which, a little more than three hundred years ago, passed not only the lovely Lady Dorothy, but with her the fine manor and all its broad lands, into the hands of the noble family of Manners, who are, or ought to be, nearly as proud of Haddon as they are of princely Belvoir.

John and Dorothy Manners, it may be as well to add here, 'lived happily ever afterwards.' Children were born to them, and their eldest son, Sir George Manners, added to the family fortunes by his marriage with Grace, daughter of Sir Henry Pierrepont, a near relative of the once ducal house of Kingston. The Lady Grace, as a monument in Bakewell Church informs us, 'bore to her husband four sons and five daughters, and lived with him in holy wedlock for upwards of thirty years.' On her husband's death, she caused him to be buried with his forefathers, and then placed a monument to his memory at her own expense, as a perpetual memorial of their conjugal faith, and joined the figure of his body with hers, having vowed that their ashes and bones should be laid together.

Such of our readers as care for genealogical details may be glad to know that, although Dorothy Vernon herself never wore the strawberry leaves of the coronet of a duchess, yet in the long run she became the direct ancestress of the Dukes of Rutland. Her grandson John succeeded as the eighth Earl of Rutland on the death of his cousin, in 1641 ; and her great-grandson, John, the ninth earl, was created Marquis of Granby and Duke of Rutland in 1703. This duke's grandson was the celebrated commander-in-chief of the British forces who served with Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick in Germany, and whose face as 'the Marquis of Granby' is so familiar on our village signboards. The 'Marquis' unhappily died before his father ; but his son Charles, the fourth duke, a nobleman most popular as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in the days of Pitt and Fox, was the grandfather of the present duke, who has inherited both Belvoir Castle, once the seat of the Lords de Ros, and Haddon Hall, the ancient home of the Vernons.

THE ECCENTRIC LADY ELLENBOROUGH

That 'Truth is stranger than fiction' is an axiom of which the justice is generally acknowledged, but so seldom realised that, whenever we hear of some event rather out of the common course occurring to any of our friends, we find ourselves involuntarily describing it as being 'like a romance.' And yet the wildest work of fiction ever penned has rarely contained incidents more extraordinarily improbable than those which marked the career of the heroine of our present story, and which—little edifying in many respects although they be—may nevertheless serve

To point a moral and adorn a tale.

Jane Elizabeth, Lady Ellenborough, if we may trust the matter-of-fact pages of 'Burke's Peerage,' was the only sister of the ninth Lord Digby, being a daughter of the late Admiral Sir Henry Digby. Her mother was a daughter of Thomas

William Coke, of Holkham, the veteran M.P. for Norfolk and well-known agriculturist, afterwards created Earl of Leicester. She was born in 1807, and when little more than seventeen was married to the late Lord Ellenborough (the Governor-General of India); but the union was dissolved by Act of Parliament in 1830, 'on account of her elopement with Prince Schwartzenberg.' She took as her second husband, two years later, Charles Theodore Herbert, Baron Vennigen, of Bavaria.

It is probable that this alliance lasted but a short time, at least if any credence may be attached to a correspondent of the Vienna *German Gazette*, who writes thus from Beyrout in 1872–3: 'I met to-day an old acquaintance, the camel-driver Sheikh Abdul, and he told me that his wife had died. Her name was once known all through the East. Sheikh Abdul is the ninth husband of Lady Ellenborough, whom I met for the first time about thirty years ago at Munich, just after she had eloped with Prince Schwartzenberg from the residence of her first husband. She then went to Italy, where, as she told me herself, she was married six times in succession. Each and all of these unions were dissolved after a short duration. In 1848 I met her at Athens, where she concluded an eighth marriage with the Greek colonel, Count Theodoki; this, however, also lasted only for a short time. Her affections were now bestowed on an old Palicar chieftain, for whom she built a beautiful house at Athens. When her latest marriage was again dissolved she went to the Levant.'

It would seem as if the old satirist Juvenal must have had Lady Ellenborough in the 'prophetic eye' of his mind when he wrote of a Roman lady some eighteen hundred years ago—

> Thus in autumns five
> Eight husbands doth she wed—a worthy thing
> To note upon her tomb!

The paragraph from the *German Gazette* above quoted having gone the round of the daily papers, both abroad and at home, gave occasion for a variety of obituary notices of the ex-Lady Ellenborough, dwelling in not very complimentary

terms upon certain parts of her singular career of adventure. It subsequently appeared that the news of her death was quite premature, and that the report had been originally put into circulation by one of her ladyship's and her second husband's bitterest enemies in the neighbourhood of Damascus, which she had made for some years her headquarters, opening her Eastern home to all sorts of visitors from the West, as well as her oriental friends. The rumour of her death was effectually contradicted a few months later by a letter in her own handwriting addressed to an English lady, who was well acquainted with her in Damascus. This lady and her husband had mourned old Lady Ellenborough for two or three months as having died in the Desert, and had quite given up all hope of ever seeing her again, when one day they received from her a letter stating that she was alive and in the best of health, and asking them to contradict the rumour of her decease.

Lady Ellenborough was fortunate in the possession of at least one sincere friend, generously eager to defend her when attacked, and to make out the best case possible for her. I refer to Isabel, Lady Burton, who had been intimately acquainted and in the habit of daily intercourse with this extraordinary woman during a residence of two years in Damascus, while her husband, Sir Richard Burton, the traveller and explorer, then English consul at that city, appears to have contracted a warm attachment for her, and speaks of her, in spite of all her faults, in terms of the highest praise. To the former, Lady Ellenborough confided the task of writing her biography, while she dictated it to her day by day. In a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, written in March 1873, when under the belief that Lady Ellenborough was dead, Lady Burton says in allusion to this biography : 'She did not spare herself, dictating the bad with the same frankness as the good. I was pledged not to publish this until after her death and that of certain near relatives.'

Lady Burton subsequently adds : 'I cannot meddle with the past without infringing on the biography confided to me ;

but I can say a few words concerning her life, dating from her arrival in the East, as told me by herself and by those now living there ; and I can add my testimony as to what I saw, which I believe will interest every one in England, from the highest downwards, and be a gratification to those more nearly concerned. About sixteen years ago, tired of Europe, Lady Ellenborough conceived the idea of visiting the East, and of imitating Lady Hester Stanhope and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, not to mention a French lady, Madame de la Tour d'Auvergne, who has built herself a temple on the top of Mount Olivet, and lives there still. Lady Ellenborough arrived at Beyrout and went to Damascus, where she arranged to go to Bagdad across the Desert. A Bedouin escort for this journey was necessary ; and as the Mezrab tribe occupied the ground, the duty of commanding the escort devolved upon Shaykh Mijwal, a younger brother of Shaykh Mohammad, chief of this tribe, which is a branch of the Great Anazeh tribe. On the journey the young Shaykh fell in love with this beautiful woman, who possessed all the qualities that could fire the Arab imagination. Even two years ago she was more attractive than half the young girls of our time. It ended by his proposing to divorce his Moslem wives and to marry her ; to pass half the year for her pleasure in Damascus—which to him was like London or Paris would be to us—and half in the Desert in order still to lead his natural life. The romantic picture of becoming queen of the Desert and of the wild Bedouin tribes exactly suited the lady's wild fancies, and was at once accepted ; and she was married, in spite of all opposition made by her friends, at the British Consulate. She was married according to Mohammedan law, changed her name to that of the Honourable Mrs. Digby El Mezrab, and was horrified when she found she had lost her nationality by her marriage and had become a Turkish subject. For fifteen years,' adds Lady Burton, 'she lived as she died,[1] the faithful and

[1] This was written at the time when the report of Lady Ellenborough's death was generally believed to be true.

affectionate wife of the Shaykh, to whom she was devotedly attached.' Half the year was passed by the couple in a very pretty house which *she* built at Damascus just without the gates of the city, and the other six months were spent according to *his* nature in the Desert in the Bedouin tents of the tribe.

'In spite of this hard life, necessitated by accommodating herself to his habits—for they were never apart—she never lost anything of the English lady nor the softness of a woman. She was always the perfect lady in sentiment, voice, manners, and speech. She never said or did anything you could wish otherwise. She kept all her husband's respect, and was the mother and the queen of his tribe. In Damascus we were only nineteen Europeans, but we all flocked around her with affection and friendship. The natives did the same. As to strangers, she received only those who brought a letter of introduction from a friend or relative; but this did not hinder every ill-conditioned passer-by from boasting of his intimacy with the House of Mezrab and recounting the untruths which he invented, *pour se faire valoir*, or to sell his book or newspaper at a better profit. She understood friendship in its best and fullest sense; and for those who enjoyed her confidence it was a treat to pass an evening with her. She spoke French, Italian, German, Slav, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, and Greek, just as she spoke her native tongue. She had all the tastes of a country life, and occupied herself alternately with painting, sculpture, music, or with her garden flowers, or poultry, or with her thoroughbred Arab mares, or in carrying out some improvement. She was thoroughly a connoisseur in each of her amusements or occupations. To the last she was fresh and young; beautiful, brave, refined, and delicate. She hated all that was false. Her heart was noble; she was charitable to the poor. She regularly attended the Protestant church, and often twice on Sundays. She fulfilled all the duties of a good Christian lady and an English woman. She is dead. All those who knew her in her latter days will weep for her. She

had but one fault (and who knows if it was hers?), washed out by fifteen years of goodness and repentance. Let us hide it, and shame those who seek to drag up the adventures of her wild youth to tarnish so good a memory. *Requiescat in pace.*'

But Lady Ellenborough was *not* dead, and, like Lord Brougham, she was able to read her own obituary notice in the English papers.

It is evident, from the tenor of the last few sentences of the foregoing letter, that the 'one fault' to which the writer alludes was the elopement of Lady Ellenborough with Prince Schwartzenberg, and that Lady Burton entirely disbelieved in the half-dozen or more apocryphal husbands intervening between Lord Ellenborough and the Arab sheikh. At any rate the eccentric lady is entitled to the benefit of the doubt; and the public curiosity respecting this extraordinary woman must remain unsatisfied until the period shall arrive when her friend and confidante, Lady Burton, will feel herself at liberty to publish the autobiography committed to her charge. Lady Ellenborough lived on to September 1881.

It would be possible, without difficulty, to draw at once a parallel and a contrast between the eccentric Lady Ellenborough and the scarcely less eccentric niece of the younger Pitt, Lady Hester Stanhope, whom I have named above, and who, more than half a century ago, exchanged English life, habits, and sentiments, and possibly also, to some extent, her faith as well, for those of the wild and romantic East. But this I must leave for another opportunity.

THE BARINGS

The Peerage of Great Britain has generally represented the landed as distinct from the commercial gentry; and, indeed, even at the present day, when money has in itself a far greater power than half a century ago, the names of those who have been raised to the Peerage from the ranks of commerce will be

found to be under a dozen ; those that occur to me being Smith, Lord Carington ; Thellusson, Lord Rendlesham ; Vanneck, Lord Huntingfield ; Glyn, Lord Wolverton ; Jones-Loyd, Lord Overstone ; Lord Rothschild ; and last, not least, the Barings, Lords Ashburton, Northbrook, and Revelstoke.

Mr. Robert Smith, who had been for some years one of the representatives in Parliament of his native town —Nottingham —and was always found on the Ministerial side of the House, was raised by Pitt, in 1796, to the Irish peerage by the title of Lord Carington. In the course of the following year he was raised to the dignity of a peer of Great Britain by the same title. This step was not accomplished, however, by Pitt, as is remarked by Sir N. Wraxall, in his 'Memoirs,' without 'his experiencing a long resistance on the part of the king. Throughout his whole reign, George the Third,' he tells us, 'adopted as a fixed principle that no individual engaged in trade, however ample might be his nominal fortune, should be created a British peer. Nor do I believe,' he adds, 'that in the course of fifty years he infringed or violated this rule, except in the single instance before us.' Up to the time of the Union of Ireland in 1800, an Irish peerage was looked upon in the case of one who was not possessed of landed property in that country as little more than an empty honour, 'producing, indeed, rank and consideration in society, but conferring no personal privilege ; neither securing his person from arrest in Great Britain, nor even enabling the individual to frank a letter.' It was said by many at the time that Lord Carington owed his elevation to his wealth and the assistance which he offered to Pitt in his difficulties ; but whether this be true or no, it is a fact that the precedent of raising to the Upper House individuals who are or have been engaged in business has not been largely followed in the present century.

The Barings, however, form a marked exception to this rule ; and, perhaps, no more striking instance of the rapid elevation of a family could well be brought forward than that

of the House of Baring, a family which, within less than a century and a half, has established a great reputation in the field of commerce, and has given several members to the two Houses of Parliament.

As in the case of their great rivals in later years, the Rothschilds, the home of the Barings was originally in Germany. The first member of the family of whom we know anything was one Henry Francis Baring, a Lutheran pastor at Bremen, who, late in life, came over to England. His son John managed, by close application to the business which he undertook—that of a cloth manufacturer at Larkbeer, in the suburbs of Exeter—to raise a considerable fortune, which he left among his four sons. Two of these, John and Francis, came up to London and established a business as importers of wool and dye-stuffs, while at the same time they were agents to the Devonshire cloth factory. This business was given up on the retirement to Exeter of the elder brother John, and Francis began to establish the fortune of the house by banking. His speculations were chiefly in Government loans, and he ingratiated himself with the then Premier, Lord Shelburne, by whom he was called the 'prince of merchants.' The dignity of a baronet was given to him in 1793, by William Pitt, who had succeeded Lord Shelburne as head of the Government. Sir Francis Baring, who married in 1766 a Miss Herring (cousin and co-heir of an Archbishop of Canterbury of that name), left by her five sons, the three eldest of whom were for a time partners in the great banking-house. Sir Thomas, not liking the notion of one bearing a title being intimately concerned with business, withdrew from the firm soon after the death of his father; and the younger of the three, Henry, spent so much of his time and fortune in gambling at the Palais-Royal in Paris, and elsewhere on the Continent, where he excited the admiration of all who beheld his stores of wealth displayed on the tables, that he was persuaded to retire from the partnership, and thus the fortunes of the house became centred in the hands of the second son,

Alexander. He had been brought up in the house of Messrs. Hope, of Amsterdam, who returned to England when Holland was occupied by the French armies. Alexander then went to the United States of America, and there married the eldest daughter of a Mr. William Bingham, considered at that time to be the richest man in that country ; she brought him a fortune of a million or so, which he took back with him to London and invested in the family concern in Bishopsgate Street.

The immense scale on which Mr. Alexander Baring carried on the business of the house gained for him in common talk the name of 'Alexander the Great.' To France, at the time of her occupation by Russian, Prussian, and Austrian armies, he granted a loan of about 1,000,000*l.* at 5 per cent., by which that country freed herself from this terrible weight. The Duc de Richelieu said, in reference to this great enterprise, that there were 'six great powers in Europe : England, France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Baring Brothers.' This Alexander held office for a few months as President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint, and was raised to the peerage as Baron Ashburton in April 1835. He died at Longleat in 1848, and was succeeded in the title by his eldest son, William Bingham, who died a few years ago, when the second son Francis took the nominal direction of the business. In this capacity he engaged in some transactions which caused considerable astonishment, one of which was the purchase of the land surrounding the Lake Tezcuco, on the island of which stands the city of Mexico—a purchase which was not long kept in the hands of the firm. Had it been otherwise, it would have been within the range of probabilities that, when a sovereign was some years since chosen for the throne of Mexico, a Baring might have been chosen to sit upon it, instead of the unfortunate Maximilian of Austria.

Mr. Francis Baring married Clare Hortense, a daughter of the Duc de Bassano, First Secretary of State under Napoleon the Great, and he purchased one of the hotels on

the Place Vendôme, Paris, for a large sum, and there took up his residence. On the death of his elder brother he succeeded to the family honours as Lord Ashburton, and retired from his connection with the great London house. He died about 1868, and was succeeded by his eldest son, whose son is the present lord.

The great banking house of the Barings was represented till very recently by the late Mr. Thomas Baring, who sat for Huntingdon in Parliament for nearly thirty years before his death in November 1873, and who more than once had offered to his acceptance the Chancellorship of the Exchequer under Conservative administrations. He was the next brother of the first Lord Northbrook, better known as Sir Francis Thornhill Baring, the third baronet, sometime Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards First Lord of the Admiralty, under Lord Melbourne's Administration. The second and present Lord Northbrook is, as our readers need not be reminded, ex-Governor-General of India, where he won a high reputation as the successor of the lamented Lord Mayo, and was raised to an earldom on his return to England, his eldest son becoming Viscount Baring. Another member of the family, Dr. Charles Baring, brother of the late Lord Northbrook, held a seat in the House of Lords as a Spiritual Peer, while he was Bishop of Durham. Another member is Edward, Lord Revelstoke.

The title of Baron Ashburton, of Ashburton, it may be added, was first conferred towards the end of the last century on John Dunning, a well-known lawyer of his day, who was married to Elizabeth, daughter of the Lutheran minister already mentioned as having come over to England and being father of the founder of the fortunes of the House of Baring. His only son, the second lord, died without issue in 1823, and the title was extinct, till revived in 1835, in the person of his maternal grandson, the above-mentioned Alexander Baring.

SIR F. DASHWOOD AND THE FRANCISCANS

I DO not know a pleasanter place on the banks of our noble Thames than the ruins of Medmenham Abbey, as they rise out of the green meadows on the Buckinghamshire side, hard by the silvery river, about half-way between Henley and Marlow. There they stand, far from the haunts of men and the busy hum of cities, breathing in their decay only of peace and its pursuits, and silently witnessing to the times of 'the old religion,' when the Angelus bell roused the villagers around three times a day to meditate on the central doctrine of the Christian faith, and when Matins, Lauds, and Vespers formed only part of a long round of sacred exercises which kept men's minds and memories fixed on the things of the world unseen, and weaned them from the pomps and vanities, the shadows and the unrealities of the present life.

The peaceful air of the country which surrounds Medmenham from Fawley to Bisham and Danesfield, and the delightful views of English riverside scenery, added to the *religio loci* by which they are haunted, make the ruins of Medmenham a favourite spot for picnics and other parties; while the stream of the Thames, which here runs clear and deep alternately, offers the very best of sport to the disciples of 'honest' Isaak Walton.

I will not here weary my readers with a long antiquarian treatise on the foundation and early history of the Abbey of Medmenham. Sufficient to say that, if we may believe Dugdale, its founder was Hugh de Bolebec, evidently a Norman noble, who had previously endowed the abbey of Woburn, in Bedfordshire, and that as a religious house it dates from the beginning of the thirteenth century; Medmenham Abbey was in fact an offshoot of the Cistercian monastery at Woburn. The abbot was 'Epistolar' of the Order of the Garter at Windsor, his office being to read the Epistle of the High Mass on the Feast of St. George. Through the poverty of the inhabitants, the abbey had fallen into a state of decay at a very

early period, and from a return made by the commissioners at the Dissolution the place appears to have been of very little importance, having only two monks, 'the house wholly in ruins, and the value of the moveable goods only 1*l.* 3*s.* 8*d.*' Its income was only a little over 20*l.* a year. At the Reformation it need hardly be said that the Abbey of Medmenham shared the fate of other houses both lesser and greater than itself. Its monks were reduced to a single brother, and the house was annexed to the Abbey of Bisham. The site subsequently passed by sale into the hands of different owners, and is now the property of Mr. Scott Murray, of Danesfield. Mr. Langley, in his history of the 'Hundred of Desborough,' thus describes the appearance of the building, which has been artificially turned into a most attractive 'ruin': 'The abbey house, with its ivy-mantled roof and walls, forms a very picturesque object. The late addition of a ruined tower, cloister, and other corresponding parts, is made with so much taste and propriety that when time shall have worn off all traces of the rule and blunted its sharp edges, when the ivy shall have continued its embraces and the mosses of various hues overspread its surface, some future writer will be disposed to class it with the more ancient pile. Within the cloister a room has been fitted up with the same good taste, and the glare of light is judiciously excluded by the pleasing gloom of ancient stained glass, chiefly coronets, roses, and portcullises. The figure of the Virgin (the abbey seal) seated on a throne, and holding the infant Saviour in her arms, carved in marble, still remains, and is placed in a niche in the tower.'

But it was reserved for the middle of the eighteenth century—for the days 'when George the Third was king'—for Medmenham Abbey to receive its *coup de grâce* in the way of desecration; and the name of John Wilkes, the honest and plain-spoken politician, stands out in disgusting prominence along with that of a scion of the aristocracy of the time, for a piece of reckless and indecent blasphemy which could scarcely be beaten by the vile scum of Paris in the first

Revolution. That such things should have been done by Frenchmen in the reaction from a hollow, courtly, and corrupt religionism to an equally absurd extreme in the opposite direction, is easily to be conceived ; and we as Englishmen are not afraid or ashamed to see and acknowledge our neighbours' faults and failings ; but that atheism of a like kind was practised openly and avowedly in the middle of the eighteenth century in England, by refined and educated Englishmen, without a blush upon their foreheads, is probably new to many of my readers, and will at first be met by them with a smile of disbelief. For the sake of my countrymen, and especially those of the 'upper ten thousand,' I heartily wish that it could be proved that what I am about to tell is a fable of my own invention. I fear, however, that, in case of any question being raised, the grey old walls of Medmenham Abbey would tell out the tale in words unmistakably plain.

Sir Francis Dashwood, Bart., of West Wycombe, in the county of Buckingham, was the eldest son of one Francis Dashwood, who, having represented Winchilsea in four successive Parliaments, and having married four wives in succession—two of them the daughters of earls—was rewarded for his eight public services by a baronetcy. His family were respectable, but nothing more ; an elder branch owned broad acres and a house on the borders of Dorset and Somerset ; and his brother had been Lord Mayor of London, of which city his father was an alderman and Turkey merchant, according to Sir Bernard Burke. But the baronet was fortunate in one of his marriages, as his wife, the Lady Mary Fane, eldest daughter of Vere, fourth Earl of Westmorland, by the death of her brothers inherited a barony in fee—that of Le Despencer. In 1762 Lady Mary Dashwood died, and her son became in his father's lifetime Lord Le Despencer. It is about this nobleman and his friends and boon companions that I am about to speak.

Born in 1708, and early initiated into public and parliamentary life under the reign of the first and second Georges,

we find Mr. Francis Dashwood, in his father's lifetime, member for Weymouth, Head of the War Office, and subsequently Treasurer of the Chambers and Master of the Wardrobe to the King, and eventually Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1763 he made good his right to his mother's barony, and was summoned accordingly to the House of Lords; and after his accession to the peerage he acted for some years as joint Postmaster-General. That this gentleman found time to intersperse his public duties with amusements of a nature scarcely compatible with any real attachment to that religion with which the English Constitution is so closely allied, will be evident to anyone who reads what I tell of him on the authority of one of his own acquaintances, Horace Walpole. That inimitable gossip—who, however, can be well relied on for contemporary history, or at all events for contemporary biography—speaking of one of George Selwyn's excesses when a youth at Oxford, for which he was sent away from Christ Church, thus explains the reason of his expulsion: 'It appears that Selwyn had obtained possession of a silver chalice used for the Communion Service, and that while at a tavern, surrounded by a jovial party of friends, he once filled it with wine and handed it round, exclaiming with mock gravity, "Drink this in remembrance of me." Some of his companions had the good sense and sufficient self-respect to leave the room while this irreverent orgie was proceeding. But it soon got talked about all over Oxford, and at last reached the ears of the authorities, who lost no time in inflicting upon the offender the greatest disgrace which was in their power, to mark their sense of the insult which he had cast upon the University and its faith.'

But, though this irreverent jest, once performed, and possibly without premeditation, by a youth at Oxford, was visited on George Selwyn with expulsion and the loss of all University prospects, it does not appear that one of Lord Bute's Ministers at all lost caste among his fellows by repeating the same act coolly and deliberately, wantonly and habitually. What was an offence to be punished by expulsion

on the banks of the Isis, was a fit, lawful, and proper act at Medmenham, some sixty miles lower down the Thames.

'There is every reason,' says the editor of Horace Walpole's Memoirs, 'to believe that out of this single outrageous act of George Selwyn arose the infamous fraternity of the Franciscans, which made Medmenham Abbey the scene of its orgies.' This society was founded by the Sir Francis Dashwood whom I have already introduced to my readers as a Minister of State under George III., and a member of Lord Bute's Cabinet. It appears that he made an association of twelve members, all gentlemen of course and boon companions of his own, whom he styled 'Franciscans' after himself as their founder and high priest. The ruins of Medmenham Abbey were part of his property; and 'why should not a man do as he likes with his own?' And what was there, I may also ask, to forbid a Minister of State to forget his public character, and in private to emulate the Regent Duke of Orleans across the water with his *Parc aux Cerfs?* Nothing in the world—not even public opinion; for there were no daily papers, or next to none, to note such deeds, and to hold up the doers of them to public execration. But to return to my subject.

John Wilkes was a member of this unholy fraternity; so, no doubt, was the Duke of Queensberry, better known as 'Old Q.'; so also was the too celebrated Paul Whitehead; and so probably was George Selwyn himself, in his earlier days. A list of the rest of the members is not to be obtained, as the Barony of Le Despencer has since passed into three other families by descent and marriage, and together with it the fair green meadows of Medmenham have also changed owners. And further, few persons now living, I think, would like to put in on their grandfathers' behalf a claim to membership. It is all very well to be able to say, 'My grandfather, or my great-grandfather was a "K.G.," or even a humble "M.P.;"' but the initials 'M.F.O.' or 'M.O.F.' a century ago could have conveyed little credit or honour to those who chose to add them to their names.

John Wilkes, however, shall describe the 'Franciscans' in his own words. I quote from a letter still extant, addressed by him to Lord Temple (afterwards Marquis of Buckingham), from Bagshot, in September 1762. Speaking of Medmenham Abbey he says: 'Rites were celebrated there of a nature subversive of all decency, and calculated, by an imitation of the ceremonies and mysteries of the Roman Catholic Church, to render not only that Church, but religion itself, an object of contumely—to such an extent, I will own, that they cannot be reflected on without astonishment. Sir Francis Dashwood himself used to officiate as high priest, habited in the dress of a Franciscan monk of the olden days, and engaged in pouring a libation from a communion cup to the mysterious object of the homage of himself and his associates.'

Here we have the very best authority for a story which at first sounds almost incredible in connection with the fair, peaceful meadows that smile among the trees, and show their image in the glassy mirror of the Thames—a scene calculated rather to inspire feelings of piety and reverence than to suggest the idea of vile and unholy rites. It is said that it was in the intervals between one week's end and the beginning of the next that these orgies were held. Well may Sir Nathaniel Wraxall pass over the subject in as few words as possible, and sum up his opinion on the matter briefly by saying, that 'the Chancellor of Lord Bute's Exchequer in 1762 far exceeded in licentiousness of conduct anything of the kind exhibited since the days of Charles II.' The poet Churchill has described Sir Francis Dashwood in his 'Franciscan' character, in his poem entitled 'The Candidate.'

Some idea of these Bacchanalian orgies may be gathered by a perusal of 'Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea'; a work much admired at the time of its publication, when its allusions were better understood than is now the case.

The antiquary, Browne Willis, speaks of some parts of the old conventual building as still standing in his time, but only a portion of a single column is now to be seen. A clump of

willows marks the former extent of the ancient buildings, the foundation walls being still discernible. The Abbey-house, as it now stands, with its 'ivy-mantled' walls, is a very good imitation—but still only an imitation—of the antique; and its effect is heightened by the addition of a tower, cloisters, and other erections in the Strawberry Hill style of Gothic art.

And what in the long run became of Sir Francis Dashwood, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Premier Baron in the Peerage of England? He 'died and was buried, and slept with his fathers.' He died issueless in the month of December 1781. This is all I know. Strangely enough, not a line in the way of obituary notice about his lordship is to be found in that repository of biographical and personal history, the *Gentleman's Magazine*. He seems to have been clean forgotten, and to have passed away out of remembrance before he died; while other statesmen and Cabinet Ministers are continually mentioned, not one in ten of my readers is aware that such a personage as Sir Francis Dashwood ever lived. Such at least would be the natural inference to be drawn from the ominous and eloquent silence of old 'Sylvanus Urban.' His baronetcy devolved on his next brother, who took the name of King, while his peerage passed to two female relatives, between whose descendants it fell into abeyance. This continued for seven or eight years, when the death of one of the rival claimants terminated that abeyance in favour of Sir Thomas Stapleton, Bart., whose grandmother was a sister of the lady who had carried the coronet of Le Despencer into the Dashwood family.

There is a portrait of Sir F. Dashwood as a Franciscan monk among the pictures belonging to the Dilettanti Society, at Willis's Rooms. It represents him, however, devoutly worshipping, not a crucifix, but a veritable daughter of Eve.

It must be a matter of congratulation to the present wearer of the coronet, now the widow of Viscount Falmouth, to reflect that she has not in her veins one drop of the blood which flowed in those of the 'High priest of the Franciscans,' and that consequently whatever curse may have rested on

himself for his misdoings is not one which is more likely to affect her ladyship than any one of the readers of these pages.

THE SACKVILLES OF DRAYTON

In the parish of Lowick, not many miles from the town of Thrapston, in Northamptonshire, in the middle of a well-timbered park and embowered in wood, stands the historic mansion of Drayton, now the residence of Mr. Stopford-Sackville. It has passed through the hands of several families as owners in the last and present centuries ; and, as considerable interest attaches itself to the name of Sackville, so dear to English readers, I will here tell one chapter out of its past history.

The manor and park of Drayton, according to Baker's 'History of Northamptonshire,' belonged, in the reign of Henry VI., to a family named Green, and its owner served twice as high sheriff of his native county. From the Greens it passed into other hands, and thence to the Mordaunts, who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were Earls of Peterborough. Lady Mary, the daughter and heiress of Henry the second Earl, and eventually in her own right Baroness Mordaunt, was one of the belles of the Court in the reigns of the later Stuarts ; and so successful was she in her angling for a husband that she contrived to hook and catch no less a suitor than Henry, Duke of Norfolk, the head and chief of 'all the Howards.'

Her marriage, however, did not turn out altogether a happy one ; for, having been found by her husband to be rather more intimate than she should have been with a certain knight, Sir John Germaine, of Westminster, the duke obtained a divorce from her Grace, and, as they had no children, Drayton reverted to the duchess as her own property. Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, who towards the end of the last century was a frequent visitor at Drayton, describes with great minute-

ness the bedchamber of the fair but frail duchess, the room which Sir John Germaine occupied when a guest, and the 'closet' with a high partition between the two apartments. The rooms still stand pretty much as they did a century ago; but it is not my intention in these sketches to pry too closely into the inner chambers of country houses, especially of those where the walls and timbers, if endued with speech, could tell strange tales.

Freed from her marriage tie with his Grace of Norfolk, the Lady Mary thought that the wisest course she could pursue would be to marry the gentleman who had helped to bring about that severance; and accordingly, a few months afterwards, the ex-duchess became Lady Mary Germaine, the marriage ceremony being performed in a somewhat private manner on account of recent scandal.

But who and what was Sir John Germaine? In order to answer this question I will frankly avow that it would be a wholly vain and useless task to make a pilgrimage to the neighbourhood of Doctors' Commons, and to search the pedigrees and papers under the keeping of my good friend 'Garter' at the Heralds' College. The fact is that Sir John Germaine's extraction, if not uncertain, was at all events variously reported, and gave rise at the time to much discussion. Every prude about the Court, and many a one in the country too, expressed her wonder and surprise that so fine a woman as her Grace of Norfolk should throw up so splendid a match for an adventurer who could scarcely tell his father's name, though possibly he might know that of his mother! 'Why, to think of such a thing! Who ever would or could have dreamed it?' exclaimed the world of female society, for once united in its chorus of most disinterested outcries.

The chatty old chronicler to whom we have already referred, and who is generally set down as a fabler simply *because he told the truth too soon after it had happened*, shall be called on to explain the mystery. If we can trust his version of the matter, Sir John Germaine's father 'bore arms as

a private soldier in the Guards of William, Prince of Orange. He happened to be possessed of a wife who was blessed with great personal charms, and was even thought to have been that Prince's mistress ; and accordingly her son was believed to have 'stood in a very near degree of consanguinity to King William III.' Other circumstances might be mentioned which confirm this supposition. For instance, though the Heralds' Visitations were not then quite obsolete, yet Sir John Germaine inherited no paternal coat-of-arms, but assumed and used on his seal a plain red cross, 'probably meaning to imply thereby that his pretensions ascended higher than his ostensible birth.' This supposition is strengthened by the fact that, on coming over to England with William the Dutchman, in 1688, the new king was no sooner seated on the throne than he signalled him out for special honours, which he had in no way earned like the Bentincks, the Keppels, the Nassaus, and the Schombergs. William treated him with great personal affection, and looked after his interests in more ways than one, procuring for him his election as a Member of Parliament, and conferring on him not only the honour of knighthood and a baronetcy (in the patent of which he is described as 'of Westminster'), but a host of pecuniary grants and other donations besides. The result was that he was rich and 'a rising man;' and the ladies all acknowledged that he was not less handsome in person than fond of 'the sex.'

His handsome face and bearing no doubt recommended him to the Lady Mary Mordaunt, who had no sooner doffed her ducal coronet than she bestowed, as we have said, upon the knight from beyond the seas her hand and heart, and with them the fine estate of Drayton.

Sir John and Lady Mary Germaine lived together for several years, but their marriage was not followed by any issue. On her ladyship's death, in 1705, the earldom of Peterborough passed to a male cousin of her father, but her own broad Northamptonshire acres and mansion she devised

by will to her husband, free from all terms and conditions. Sir John Germaine, though at first he was (of course) somewhat inconsolable for her loss, gradually settled down into a serene and contented frame of mind, and no doubt found little difficulty in acquiescing in the arrangements of Providence in his own regard.

Though he had been duly naturalised, and by his long residence in England had even become quite an Englishman in speech and habits, yet we are told that he preserved to the last some of the tastes and *penchants* of a native of the Low Countries. Among other things he was a firm and staunch friend of Sackville, Duke of Dorset, and still more so of his duchess. The latter was a daughter of Marshal Colyear, brother to the first Earl of Portmore, who had entered early into the service of the Dutch sovereign. Perhaps, too, he was fond of duchesses as such. At all events, he always called her Grace of Dorset his countrywoman, and visited frequently at the house of her father and husband, and (what is more), so far as we know, without compromising her good name. Accordingly, as he found himself after the death of his first wife in possession of a landed estate and childless, he grew desirous of transmitting Drayton to some descendants or adopted heirs. But first he thought that he would try the simpler and more natural plan of a second matrimonial union, leaving it open to himself to fall back upon the *dernier procès* of legal adoption in default of success hereafter. Such being the case, he resolved to look around him for a young and blooming wife, who would be likely to give him the blessing of an heir. So, with this object in view, while staying at the Bristol Hot Wells he cast his eyes upon the fair Lady Betty Berkeley, a daughter of the Earl of Berkeley—a lady whose birth, beauty, and accomplishments made her every way worthy of his choice. Being many years younger than himself, and at the same time a woman of good sense and good abilities, she acquired great influence over him. Added to this, she was herself intimate with the Duchess of Dorset, so that the friendship between

the two families became more strongly cemented than ever by the new alliance. By his youthful second wife Sir John Germaine had several children ; but, unfortunately, they all died young ; and since, in his declining years, when tortured with the gout, Lady Betty proved herself as kind and tender a nurse as she had been a good wife and mother, he resolved to make her his heir.

Accordingly, before his death, in 1718, he called her to his bedside, and thus addressed her : 'Lady Betty, I have made you a very indifferent husband, and particularly of late years, when illness had made me a burden to myself ; but I shall not be much longer a trouble to you. I advise you never again to marry an old man ; but I exhort you and wish you, when I am gone, to marry again ; and, as a proof that I mean what I say, I mean at all events to put it in your power to do so. You have been a good and excellent wife to me, and I have therefore by my will bequeathed to you this estate, which I received from my first wife, and which, as she gave it freely to me, so I as freely give to you. I hope you will marry, and that you will have children to inherit it. But, if events should happen otherwise, or if you marry, but have no surviving child, then it would give me pleasure to think that Drayton descended, after your decease, to a younger son of my old friends the Duke and Duchess of Dorset.'

Lady Betty, being young when she was left a widow, survived her husband fifty years, and, as there happened just then to be a dearth of *soi-disant* 'Dukes' of Roussillon about town, she never married a second time. She continued, however, her friendship with the Dorsets ; and when she died, she willed the estate of Drayton, not to any of her own relations, but to the Duke's second son, Lord George Sackville, on condition that he took the name of Germaine in lieu of his patronymic. Her will is still extant, and it is not a little curious ; but a strong confirmation of the story told above may be found in the fact that when speaking of the *name* of Germaine she says nothing about the *arms* of that family—two points which the

Heralds' College scarcely ever contemplate as separable, even in thought.

Lord George Sackville, as my readers will remember, in early life served in the army at Dettingen, Fontenoy, Minden, and several other battles abroad, as well as subsequently in the Scottish campaign of 1745. He was a godson of King George I., and for many years a Member of the House of Commons and Secretary of State for Ireland, and also for America under Lord North's Administration. It was he, too, who was sent by the Duke of Cumberland in 1748 to negotiate the peace with Marshal Saxe. He was severely blamed, and even censured by a court-martial, for his conduct at Minden ; but he afterwards rose, as I have said, to high ministerial employments at home.

In 1782, on retiring from office, he was created (not, however, without remonstrance on the part of some noble lords) Viscount Sackville, and Baron of Bolebrooke, in Sussex—titles which passed to his son and successor, but were subsequently merged in the ducal title of Dorset, which that son inherited in 1815 on the death of his cousin. These titles, however, all became extinct at the last duke's death without issue in 1843. It so happened, however, that his uncle, John, third Duke of Dorset, the owner of princely Knole, and of Buckhurst in Sussex, though he had no son, yet left two daughters, married respectively to the Earl of Plymouth and Earl Delawarr. The estate of Knole, and eventually the representation of the historic house of Sackville, and of its honours—which had included the Viscomty of Sackville and the Baronies of Bolehurst and of Buckhurst—passed to the younger daughter, who in 1864 was created in her own right Baroness Buckhurst. This title, at her death in 1870, devolved, under a special remainder, on her second surviving son, Earl Delawarr, while a younger son inherited 'princely' Knole and was created Lord Sackville.

The title of Buckhurst is one which all my readers will identify with the name of Thomas Sackville, first Earl of

Dorset, Lord High Treasurer of England in the reign of Elizabeth, who is known as the author of some poems which have taken their place among English classics, and are read with delight wherever the English tongue is spoken.

It only remains to add that the mansion of Drayton House is described in the 'Beauties of England and Wales' as an antiquated and castellated structure, and that in an engraving of the house by Buck (1722) it is said that the house was formerly a castle; but if so, it must have been very much altered, though it still retains some of its castellated features in its embattled walls and entrance gateway, and the two square turrets at either end. It contains, *inter alia*, a fine collection of pictures and portraits by the most eminent masters. In Lowick Church, under the east window of the north isle, is an altar-tomb, on which is a recumbent female figure, representing the Lady Mary Mordaunt, whose marriages we have already recorded. On the north side, on a similar tomb, lies the effigy of a knight in armour, with an inscription stating that beneath it repose the remains of Sir John Germaine, knight and baronet, who figures in the Extinct Baronetage as 'Sir John Germaine, of Westminster,' and who there appears to have had neither father nor mother. At all events, his pedigree is 'conspicuous by its absence' from the work of Sir Bernard Burke—an omission very significant, and a strong confirmation of the supposition which I have already recorded as to his real parentage. I have read, though I cannot now tell where, a statement to the effect that Sir John Germaine was so illiterate a person that he could scarcely sign his name; but I cannot vouch for the truth of the assertion.

THE DUCAL HOUSE OF SUTHERLAND

In an early chapter of this volume,[1] while speaking of the Grenvilles, I took occasion to remark that many of our ducal houses are built up, so far as wealth is concerned, of a succes-

[1] See *ante*, p. 217

sion of heiresses. Of no family is my remark more true than it is in the noble House of Gower, which, rising steadily but slowly, at last, some sixty years ago, reached its zenith of exaltation, when its head won its strawberry leaves from William IV. The Gowers, however, have been among the 'noble and gentle men' of England for many a long age. According to the consent of all our best antiquaries, they can claim a Saxon origin, and in all probability, like the Coplestones and two other Devonshire families, can boast that their ancestors were 'at home' -seated, that is, on lands of their own—'when the Conqueror came;' so that it mattered little to them, as they walked across their broad acres at Sittenham, in Yorkshire, noble though unentitled, and 'monarchs of all they surveyed,' whether Harold or William was doomed to win the battle of Hastings.

Be this, however, as it may, at all events towards the close of the thirteenth century, in the reign of Henry III. or of Edward I., we find Sir John Gower, a Yorkshire knight, under orders to repair to Carlisle with horse and arms on the Feast of St. John the Baptist, and to march northwards with the king's army into Scotland; and it is probably his son, Lawrence Gower, who obtained a pardon from Edward II. for having had a hand in the murder of the royal favourite, Piers Gaveston. His son, Sir Nicholas, took part in the council of the realm held at Northampton under Edward the Black Prince; and his son again, Sir John Gower, standard-bearer to Prince Edward, was taken prisoner at the battle of Tewkesbury and afterwards beheaded. In the next century or two we find the heads of the family constantly honoured with knighthood, and allying themselves with ladies of gentle blood, such as the Constables, the Mauleverers, and the Fairfaxes.

But the chief pride of this family, if any weight may be attached to the statement of Leland and others, is the fact that from it sprang one of the first of our English poets; I mean, of course, John Gower, who formed with Chaucer and

Lydgate the 'celebrated triumvirate' of early poets in this country, much as did Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch in Italy. Gower is supposed to have been born about the year 1325, but the exact place of his birth is unknown. It is recorded of him that he was certainly rich, and a Yorkshireman ; and it is conjectured that he was a knight, and even a judge. As well as being a man of letters, he was an accomplished jurist, and he did not neglect the practice of the law even while he attached himself ardently to literature. Gower enjoyed the friendship of the great men of his country, and was honoured with the recognition of royalty. Like Chaucer, he is stated to have had his strong political predilections, attaching himself to the House of Lancaster under Thomas Woodstock, as his friend did under John of Gaunt.

Passing on to the reign of Charles I., we come to Sir Thomas Gower, twice High Sheriff of Yorkshire, who suffered severely in pocket and in purse for his faithful allegiance to his king. His first wife, however, one of the Howards of Naworth, brought him a fair accession of fortune ; and with his second wife, Frances, second daughter and co-heiress of Sir John Leveson, he obtained the estate of Lillieshall, in Shropshire. His son Sir William, being adopted by his mother's brother, Sir Richard Leveson, of Trentham, inherited those magnificent estates in that county, which eventually gave, or were thought to give, his descendants a fair claim to the Marquisate of Stafford, and caused the addition of the name and arms of Leveson to the surname and shield of the Gowers. He, too, was tolerably successful in his matrimonial adventures, as he obtained for a wife the Lady Jane Granville, eldest daughter and ultimately heiress of the Granvilles, Earls of Bath.

The mantle of good fortune which had been worn by his predecessor descended on his son, Sir John Leveson-Gower, who married the daughter of the first Duke of Rutland, and was raised to the peerage as Lord Gower. His son, the second Lord Gower, was three times married, and each marriage

helped to fill higher and higher its coffers, which were already very fairly supplied. His first wife was a daughter of the ducal House of Kingston ; his second a rich widow, for whom and for whose cash the mouth of many a nobleman might have watered ; and his third spouse was the co-heiress of the Earl of Thanet.

Thus enriched and powerfully connected, it was almost a matter of course that in time he should have been advanced to an earldom, an honour which he obtained from George II. But the cup of prosperity for the Gowers was not yet full. His son and successor, the second earl, having been left a widower at a most fortunate juncture, chose as his second wife the Lady Louisa Egerton—daughter, and eventually heiress, of Scrope, first Duke of Bridgewater—a lady of royal descent, who traced her pedigree in the female and, what is more, in the legitimate, line from royalty ; namely, from Mary, Queen Dowager of France, own sister of Henry VIII. She brought, however, to the Leveson-Gowers something better than mere royal blood ; for through her the greater portion of the Lancashire property of the Dukes of Bridgewater passed to one of her husband's grandsons, as will be seen presently. Having sat in the Lower House of Parliament as M.P. for Westminster and Lichfield, and held several high offices of state in the earlier Ministries of the reign of George III., and having married for his third wife a daughter of the then all-powerful House of Stewart, Earl of Galloway, Lord Gower was raised in 1786 to the Marquisate of Stafford—the ancient barony of Stafford, once vested in the Jerninghams, being then dormant, and supposed not very likely to be claimed by or restored to its Roman Catholic owners,[1] as the penal laws had not then been repealed.

The first Marquis of Stafford died at the beginning of this century, but not until he had seen his younger son on the high road to a coronet, and his eldest son married to probably the greatest heiress in land and money, and the owner of the

[1] See *ante*, p. 229.

most illustrious title in the peerage of Scotland—I mean the earldom of Sutherland, of which Sir Bernard Burke tells us that, 'according to the traditionary details of some of the Scottish writers, it is the most ancient in North Britain;' while Douglas says that 'it gives way to few, if to any, in Europe'—words equivalent to those of Lord Hailes when he speaks in round terms of the origin of the earldom of Mar as 'lost in antiquity.'

The heiress of Sutherland, however, did not gain her position without a fight, her claim to the coronet of her father and grandfather being stoutly contested by two Scotch gentlemen, Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstown, and George Sutherland of Force. The question resolved itself into a great 'peerage case,' which formed a *cause célèbre* a century ago; and the House of Lords adjudged the coronet of Sutherland to the young lady, who a few years later added to the Staffordshire and Shropshire estates her own magnificent inheritance in Scotland, consisting of the best part of the two counties of Sutherland and Caithness, once the property of the Lords of Reay.

It might be thought that the tide of prosperity could flow no longer, could rise no higher; but such was not the case, for in 1833, a few months before the death of the fortunate marquis, he gained the much-coveted strawberry leaves, being gazetted to the highest rank in the English peerage as Duke of Sutherland, a county over which he and his wife, the late duchess-countess, had long exercised the rights almost of petty sovereigns.

The second duke, by his marriage with a lady of the House of Howard, added rather to his political influence than to his broad acres or his banking account; but the third duke, having married the heiress of the Hay-Mackenzies of New Hall and Cromartie, N.B., annexed on to his northern principality most of the lands which formerly belonged to the Earls of Cromartie, whose title was renewed in favour of the duchess, with remainder to her younger children.

The noble House of Gower, therefore, is in this present condition. Its heads and chiefs, in little more than a century and a half, have won their way from plain gentlemen holding lands in Yorkshire to a barony, an earldom, a marquisate, and a dukedom. They have absorbed into them a whole Scottish earldom of venerable antiquity, and almost all the wealth of the Duke of Bridgewater, to say nothing of heiresses in every generation ; and, even reckoning the Scotch earldom and the English dukedom of Sutherland as only one title in reality, members of the family now hold besides the earldoms of Granville, Cromartie, and Ellesmere, the last-named title having been conferred about a quarter of a century since on the second duke's younger brother, Lord Francis Leveson-Gower, better known by his subsequent name of Lord Francis Egerton. In the same way, to go back to the previous generation, the first duke's younger brother was created Lord Granville.

In the entire range of the English, Scottish, and Irish peerage, so far as my researches have extended at present, I can find two, and only two, parallel to the good fortune which —if coronets are signs of success—has attended the House of Gower. The one instance is to be found in the House of Boyle, Earl of Cork, whose ancestor, Richard, the second earl, sat in the Irish House of Peers in virtue of his hereditary title, and was also created Earl of Burlington, in England, while his brother Lewis was raised to the dignity of Viscount Boyle, his brother Roger to that of Earl of Orrery, and his brother Francis to that of Viscount Shannon. The fifth and youngest brother, Robert Boyle, was the celebrated philosopher ; ennobled sufficiently by his own transcendental abilities, he repeatedly refused the peerage dignities which were offered to him. Had he accepted these, there would have been five brothers all in the enjoyment of the honours of the peerage at one and the same time. The second instance is of more recent date, and will readily occur to the minds of most of my readers ; for from the year 1820 to 1840, or thereabouts, four

brothers of the name of Wellesley held seats at the same time in the Upper House of the Legislature- namely, Richard, Marquis Wellesley; Henry, Lord Cowley; William, Lord Maryborough; and last, not least, Arthur, Duke of Wellington.

It has been said over and over again by careless and superficial writers that the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland have not proved themselves benefactors to the cottars and poorer tenantry upon their large northern estates, and that their Graces are a standing example of the bad effects which follow on the formation of such gigantic properties, and the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a single individual. Before I ask my reader to form a judgment on the question, I may well be pardoned for craving his attention to a few facts and figures, which I have ascertained to be trustworthy. It has been often stated in the newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic that the greatest cruelty has been practised by the late and present Dukes of Sutherland, by 'evicting' their tenantry in the North and turning their homes into sheep-walks. Now the real facts are these, to use the words of Mrs. Beecher Stowe, in her 'Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands':

'Soon after the union of the crowns of England and Scotland, the border chiefs found it profitable to adopt upon their estates that system of agriculture to which their hills were adapted, rather than to continue the maintenance of military retainers. Instead of keeping garrisons, with small armies, in a district, they decided to keep only so many as could profitably cultivate the land. The effect of this, of course, was like disbanding an army. It threw many people out of employ, and forced them to seek for a home elsewhere. Like many other movements which, in their final results, are beneficial to society, this was at first vehemently resisted, and had to be carried into effect in some cases by force. As I have said, it began first in the southern counties of Scotland, soon after the union of the English and Scottish crowns, and gradually

crept northward—one county after another yielding to the change. To a certain extent, as it progressed northward, the demand for labour in the great towns absorbed the surplus population ; but when it came into the extreme Highlands, this refuge was wanting. Emigration to America now became the resource ; and the surplus population were induced to this by means such as the Colonisation Society now recommends and approves for promoting emigration to Liberia.'

The first farm so formed on the Sutherland estates dates from 1806. Further changes were made by the first duke in 1811–12, and completed in 1819-20. It was found necessary, in the interests of the cottars themselves, to remove them in large numbers from their inland homes, inaccessible and far away from roads, where they were often in danger of starving, down to the sea-coast, where they might support themselves by the fishery. New lots of land were therefore leased to them near the sea and the mouths of rivers, where they could maintain themselves by labour and industry. They had two years given them to prepare for the change, without any payment of rent being exacted. Timber, too, was given for building their houses, and other facilities were afforded them.

The agent for the management of the Sutherland estates, the late Mr. James Loch, M.P., in a speech in the House of Commons on the Scotch Poor Law Bill in 1845, declared from his own knowledge that while not one sixpence of rent 'was received by the duke from the poor on his Sutherlandshire estates from 1811 to 1833, on the contrary, there had been spent among them for the benefit and improvement of the people no less than sixty thousand pounds.' Formerly, he said, so great was the danger of the poor dying of starvation, that in the winter they were often forced to bleed their cattle and mix the blood with their meal ; but since the establishment of them on the coast, they had formed a town (Helmsdale) which in 1811 did not exist, and that in 1844 they had exported upwards of 37,000 barrels of herrings ; the fishery employing nearly 4,000 persons.

In former times it appears that the estates were in the hands of 'middlemen,' who sublet them to the poor at advanced rentals; an end, however, had been put to this state of things, and in many places the rents had been lowered thirty-six per cent., while the duke had granted his tenants timber and stone for their dwellings as a free gift.

The following is an extract from Mr. Loch's published statement on this subject:

'Since 1811 the people have become immediate tenants, at a greatly diminished rate of rent, and released from all these exactions. For instance, in two parishes in 1812, the rents were 1,593*l.*, and in 1823 they were only 972*l.* In another parish the reduction of rents has amounted on an average to thirty-six per cent. Previous to 1811 the houses were turf huts of the poorest description, in many instances the cattle being kept under the same roof with the family. Since 1811 a large proportion of their houses has been rebuilt in a superior manner—the landlord having paid them for their old timber where it could not be moved, and having also contributed the new timber, with lime.

'Before 1811 all the rents of the estates were used for the personal profit of the landlord; but since that time, both by the present duke and his father, all the rents have been expended on improvements in the county, besides 60,000*l.* more which have been remitted from England for the purpose. This money has been spent on churches, school-houses, harbours, public inns, roads, and bridges.

'In 1811 there was not a carriage-road in the county, and only two bridges. Since that time 430 miles of road have been constructed on the estate at the expense of the proprietor and tenants. There is not a turnpike gate in the county, and yet the roads are kept perfect.

'Before 1811 the mail was conveyed entirely by a foot runner, and there was but one post-office in the county; and there was no direct post across the county, but letters to the north and west were forwarded once a month. A mail-coach

has since been established, to which the late Duke of Sutherland contributed more than 2,600*l.*; and since 1834 mail-gigs have been established to convey letters to the north and west coast, towards which the Duke of Sutherland contributes 300*l.* a year. There are sixteen post-offices and sub-offices in the county. Before 1811 there was no inn in the county fit for the reception of strangers. Since that time there have been fourteen inns either built or enlarged by the duke.'

Sixty years since, too, there was not a gig in the county and scarcely a cart on the estate; no baker, and only two shops besides two smithies; no woodlands to supply firewood; hardly any exports; no saving banks, no resident surgeon, and no schools. So great, however, was the progress of the district in civilisation, that in 1845 there were forty-one gigs, eleven hundred and thirty-one carts, eight bakers' and forty-six grocers' shops, many thousand acres of plantations for the supply of fuel, while the exports amounted to 40,000 sheep and 80,000 fleeces of wool, besides 50,000 barrels of herrings. Savings banks, too, had been established in every large village, twelve boys' and girls' schools had been built and endowed with salaries for the teachers; and there were five medical gentlemen on the estate, three of whom received allowances from the duke for their attendance on the poor in the districts where they severally reside.

Added to this there is, and has been for years, under the patronage of his Grace, a Farmers' Club, or other agricultural association, of which the leading gentry and tenantry are members; and that they are not indolent and unintelligent members may be guessed from the fact that not so very long ago Professor Johnston, at their invitation, paid a visit to Sutherlandshire in order to deliver a course of lectures on Agriculture and Agricultural Chemistry.

The population of the Sutherland estates was estimated by Mr. Loch, upwards of twenty years ago, at nearly 22,000. I fancy that if poverty must ever be my lot, I should much prefer to be a pauper on the estate of his Grace of Suther-

land than to carry on the struggle for bare existence in a garret in Soho, or Lambeth, or Clerkenwell.

A single anecdote of the late Duke of Sutherland will fully justify me in my preference, and explain the meaning of my last remark :

In 1827, when there was much suffering on account of bad seasons, the Duke of Sutherland sent down his chief agent to look into the condition of the people, who desired the ministers of the parishes to send in their lists of the poor. To his surprise it was found that there were located on the estate a number of people who had settled there without leave. They amounted to four hundred and eight families, or two thousand persons ; and though they had no legal title to remain where they were, no hesitation was shown in supplying them with food in the same manner with those who were tenants, on the sole condition that on the first opportunity they should take cottages on the seashore and become industrious people.

COLONEL CHARTRES

If my readers will turn to the pages of Burke, or the first 'Peerage' which they may have at hand, they will find the surname of 'Charteris' given as the present patronymic of the family of the Earl of Wemyss.

But my readers will not learn from the 'Peerage' that the name of 'Charteris' is usually pronounced as 'Charters' or 'Chartres,' as indeed it was often written early in the last century, when we had no penny post or cheap newspapers and a popular press to produce and circulate them ; and perhaps it is quite as well for the honour and reputation of the Wemyss family that they should have changed for late years the orthography of their name, if it be only in order to escape the memory of the infamy which attached to one of their ancestors a century and a half ago.

It is just possible that some of my readers may be among

the number of those who take a delight—as I will own that I have done even from childhood—in Pope's noble 'Essay on Man.' If so, they will have no difficulty in calling to the memory a couplet in the Fourth Book, where the poet asks in an impassioned tone,

> 'Shall some old temple nodding to its fall
> For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall!'

No doubt, too, they will have imagined that this 'Chartres,' whoever he may have been, was some contemporary low fellow of bad character, whose name was then a byword and a proverb for roguery and villany, and has since passed out of remembrance. Indeed, even Dr. Croly, in his annotated edition of the works of Pope, passes the passage by with only two brief lines by way of footnote, stating that he was 'an infamous profligate, who, after a long life of scandalous impunity, was at length hanged by a denial of justice.'

Now I do not dispute the Rev. Doctor's assertion that Chartres was 'an infamous profligate,' but I own that I am fairly puzzled as to what he really meant by his concluding words; and as to his being hanged, the real fact is that, literally and truly, he was never hanged at all, and that it was his escape from hanging, and not his execution, that arose from a 'denial of justice.' In fact, as my readers will easily see, he was screened by his high and noble relatives, aided by royal favour, from the fate to which he was most justly sentenced, and died quietly in his own bed.

Francis Chartres, or Charters, was a member of a respectable and worthy, not to say noble, Scottish house, whose members had lived for generations—it is stated in one account for no less than 400 years—on their own estate at Amisfield, in East Lothian or Haddingtonshire. He was born about the year 1668, in the licentious days of Charles II., from the members of whose Court at an early age he had imbibed instructions in vicious ways, which he certainly carried out into practice when he passed from youth into manhood and to

middle age. His mother was the daughter of a titled house; and both paternally and maternally he was related to and connected with a host of the nobility of the northern kingdom. As a youth he was tall, elegant, and highly accomplished, and had received the best education that it was possible to procure in the northern metropolis; so that when he came to the age of seventeen or eighteen, and made choice of the army as a profession, he had no difficulty in obtaining a commission as ensign in a foot regiment, with which he served under the great Duke of Marlborough in some of his earlier campaigns on the Continent. Here he showed so much promise that before long he was advanced to a cornetcy in a regiment of dragoons, where he speedily became a general favourite. At all events he 'played his cards' remarkably well, in one sense at the least; for, being a man of pleasure, a most expert gamester, and of a disposition which grew more and more avaricious in proportion as he needed cash for his pleasures, he made his knowledge of gambling subservient to his love of money. Accordingly, while the army was in winter quarters in the Low Countries, he stripped many of his brother-officers of their property and 'expectations' by his skill at cards and at dice. Ere long, however, his popularity came to be on the wane, for he had no sooner fleeced a fellow-officer of his gold than he would offer to lend him, to meet his liabilities, another sum at the very moderate interest of a hundred per cent., taking from him an assignment of his commission as a security for the repayment of the debt.

It happened that about this time John, Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Stair, and some few other younger members of noble Scottish houses, were in the army also, and, like wise and 'canny' Scotchmen, resolved that they would not look on tamely and see their brother-officers, less 'canny' than themselves, ruined by the artifices of Charters, although he too was from 'the Land o' Cakes.' Accordingly, they applied to the then Earl of Orkney, who was a general officer, and who happened to be quartered at Brussels, and represented to him the

ruin which would result to the younger officers in the mess-room if a stop were not put to his proceedings. Lord Orkney, anxious for the credit of the army in general, and for that of his own countrymen in particular, explained the state of the case to his Grace of Marlborough, who issued his orders that Charters should be put under arrest and brought in due course to answer for his misdoings before a court-martial. In fact, it was clear that the young laird from Haddingtonshire had learned to 'play his cards' even a little too well!

The court, as I learn from a military source of information, was composed of an equal number of Scottish and English officers, in order that Charters and his friends might have no pretence for saying that he had been treated in any way unfairly or partially. After a candid hearing of the case, the court-martial resolved that the proofs of his villany were conclusive, and such as could not be ignored or passed over. He was found guilty of 'conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman'; was sentenced to be deprived of his commission and to be drummed out of his regiment, his sword having first been broken; and further, he was ordered to return to his victims the money of which he had robbed them by extracting usurious rates of interest.

Thus disgraced, he was forced of necessity to quit Brussels; but he soon showed that he had by no means lost his wits with his commission. The story is told, that on the road between that city and Malines he threw his breeches into a ditch, and then, buttoning his long cloak close around him, went into an inn, where he took up his quarters for the night. It is usual—or at all events it was usual at that time—for military men to be treated with all possible respect in places where the army may happen to be quartered. And this was the case with Charters, the news of whose recent punishment had not flown before him, as it would nowadays, on the wings of the post and the *Times*. No sooner, accordingly, had he entered the house, than mine host and hostess treated him with all honour, placing before him the best of such fare as they

happened to have in the house. So, after ordering and despatching an elegant supper—not, it may be imagined, without plenty of the best wine that the cellar could afford—he was shown upstairs by the servants, and left to take his repose. Early in the morning, however, he alarmed the house by ringing his bell violently. The landlord was frightened, and came rushing to his room, his head wrapped up in a nightcap and his clothes in disorder. Charters at once violently attacked him, swearing furiously, and vowing that either he or some of his rascally servants had found their way into his room and had robbed him of his breeches, which contained in their pocket a diamond ring, a gold watch, and money in notes and coin to a considerable amount; and, a pane of the window having been found conveniently broken, he intimated that the robber must have entered the room by that way, and that probably the culprit was the landlord himself. In vain did the landlord, and the landlady too—who now came to the scene of action—declare that they knew nothing of the matter, and that the maids, the waiter, and the ostler had each and all been in their respective beds all night; Charters threatened the landlord, in tones that we may suppose to be those of an irritated 'officer and gentleman,' that he should be sent off straight to Brussels, and be brought to trial for felony, or, at all events, as an accessory to a deed of felony. In vain did mine host kneel down and implore, if not forgiveness, at all events mercy; Charters was inexorable. At length, frightened out of his wits, and alarmed at the loss of custom and the disgrace which threatened to befall his house, which had hitherto borne an irreproachable character for honesty and integrity, he sent one of his servants to the friars of a convent hard by, to whom he explained the crisis and fix in which he found himself. The poor friars, good and simple souls that they were, believed his story, and generously supplied the poor man with a sum of money, sufficient to satisfy Captain Charters—to reimburse him, at all events, for the loss which he pretended to have sustained.

Having thus 'fleeced' the poor monks and an honest landlord by his threats and lies, this worthy and high-principled youth went off pretty quickly from Mechlin, and found his way to some port in Holland, where it was easy to secure a passage back to Scotland. He did so, and as there were no newspapers to spread abroad the news of his disgrace, he put a bold front on the matter and returned to Haddingtonshire, giving out that he was once more at home, having obtained leave of absence for his health, or on 'urgent private affairs,' or some other excuse equally valid.

Settled down as a respectable inhabitant at Amisfield, his native place, and attending the kirk regularly on the 'Sabbath' day, he soon found that he had not lost caste in Haddingtonshire; and society in Edinburgh was either conveniently forgetful or extremely tolerant of his errors and indiscretions, because he was a young man of good family and estate, with plenty of money and still better prospects, and a widower to boot—a consideration which pleaded his cause most eloquently with the unmarried ladies of Edinburgh, both maids and widows, some of whom he began to wheedle out of their money, under the stale pretence of visiting them in the capacity of a suitor.

His money, however, stood him in even better service than this; for, backed up by the good offices of some of his influential and titled friends, and a judicious distribution of bank notes in certain quarters, he found himself one fine morning restored to his rank in the army, with a fresh commission in a horse regiment, in which before very long he was advanced to the rank of colonel. At this time one of his 'Scotch cousins,' the Duke of Queensberry, happened to be acting as Commissioner to the Scottish Parliament, which was then sitting at Edinburgh, for the purpose of negotiating and carrying into effect the measure known subsequently to history as the 'Union.' Here he turned to good account at once his old abilities in the card-sharping line, and also his connection with the ducal house—the *entrée* to which, I may

presume, gave admission to most of the many grand houses then inhabited by earls and marquises who lived in the streets and courts of 'Auld Reekie.' Being invited one evening to a card-party at the house of her Grace of Queensberry, he contrived to place the duchess in front of a large glass, in which he could see all the cards in her hand reflected. By this clever stratagem he won, it is said, no less than three thousand pounds, and at a single sitting. The great loss which his duchess had sustained reached the ears of the duke, who, however, I believe, lived on—happy man and died, unconscious of the vile means which the gallant 'colonel' had adopted; but he was so annoyed at the loss, that he absolutely introduced into Parliament a Bill to prohibit gaming above a certain sum, and I have heard, though I do not know it for certain, that the Bill passed into law. I dare say that, if such is the case, some of my readers will be able to hunt it up in the Statute-book—a process for which I have neither the time nor the inclination.

The colonel meantime continued his depredations on the thoughtless, until he had acquired sufficient money to add largely to his estates in Scotland. He did not, however, reside at Amisfield, but took up his head-quarters at Edinburgh, where he thought he would find plenty of widows, equally rich and silly, to welcome him as a gay and rich man, looking out for a well-endowed partner. What a pity that he did not bring back with him from the Low Countries a high-sounding title of foreign nobility; for then possibly the sham strawberry leaves of a ducal coronet might have dazzled the eyes of some ambitious widow, and Roussillon himself have been out-Roussilloned! But, alas for his chances in the northern metropolis, a young officer, happening to come over at this juncture from Brussels, told the story of Charters's disgrace and fall in the old card-playing duchess's drawing-room. Her Grace saw quickly her opportunity, and took her revenge. The colonel was at once 'tabooed' from society in Northern Athens, and his hunting-ground for rich widows was destroyed.

The colonel, however, was not to be so easily taken aback. He had resources of his own to fall back upon. He would remove to London, as a place better suited than the northern capital for the doings of such a *chevalier d'industrie*. Here, though at that time London reckoned its population by thousands, and not by millions, he found a fresh field for his exertions in the humble service of Plutus. He became a noted lender of money on mortgages, for which he always took care to receive a large premium. In a few years he became so rich as to have purchased estates not only in Haddingtonshire, but also in more than one English county, and to set up for one of the 'landed gentry' south as well as north of the Tweed. He contrived to flatter the vanity and excite the matrimonial hopes of half a score of middle-aged ladies, whom he took good care to compromise in such a variety of ways that they could never bring the law to bear upon him, and were forced to sit brooding over their wrongs in solitary silence. One poor lady, indeed—a charming and accomplished widow, of good family and connections, who was living with her nine children in her father's house at Marylebone, and to whom he introduced himself as a French duke or a German count—he contrived so to compromise in her reputation, to entangle in his toils, and to plunder by extortionate demands, that she ended her days in a madhouse. And all this while, so mean and so grasping was the heartless usurer, that if coin or jewels were not readily and punctually supplied by his dupes and victims, he would cause threatening messages to reach them through their servants, and wait at the top of the area steps until the housemaid or kitchen-drudge appeared, with the expected amount of gold or silver in her hands to purchase his silence!

Happily, however, this work was not destined to go on for ever, and the accomplished villain tried his practised hand once too often on apparently helpless and friendless females. In 1729, having grievously insulted and assaulted a young person, named Anne Bond, whom he had engaged as a servant in his house, the poor girl had the courage to summon him before

the magistrates, who, finding the case more serious than at first they thought, committed him to prison to stand his trial for a capital offence.

On the rest of the story I need not dwell at length. Enough to add that this shameless deceiver, who had compromised so many reputations, found himself at last imprisoned in Newgate among the felons, where, as we are told in a contemporary account, 'he was loaded with heavy fetters.' But even here he was able to make the influence of his money felt; for, adds the writer, 'he soon purchased a lighter pair, and paid also for the use of a room in the prison, and for a man to attend on him.'

The fact is that in early life, before he had entered on those deplorable courses which in the end led him on to ruin, he had been married to a lady of good family, the daughter of Sir John Swinton, a Berwickshire laird, who had made a large fortune as a merchant in Holland, having resided there during the Usurpation. By her, too, most fortunately for himself, he had an only child, a daughter, who, not long before the time of which I write, had become the wife of a most powerful Scotch nobleman, the Earl of Wemyss. This daughter's marriage, or rather I should say her husband, now saved his life from the gallows at Tyburn. It is not creditable to the cause of even and fair-handed justice, which knows no distinction between a peer and a peasant; but the truth must be told without fear or favour. The Earl of Wemyss happening to be in London at the time, and having powerful friends at Court, contrived to intercede with some effect on behalf of his father-in-law, and procured on his behalf a writ of *habeas corpus*. The colonel, therefore, was admitted to bail, although, according to the strict letter of the law, bail was not admissible in a capital offence. 'It must, therefore,' says the writer of an article in the 'Book of Wonders,' 'reflect no small disgrace on those to whom the administration of the law was at that time entrusted, that power and family interest should thus triumph over justice.'

But such, in the event, was the case. Although thirty years later, as I have already told my readers,[1] Lord Ferrers found that his peer's coronet, and the fact that he quartered on his shield the Royal Arms of England, were of no avail to save him from a felon's death at Tyburn ; yet Colonel Charters on this occasion contrived in the end to elude the stern and rigorous grasp of the hand of justice.

The trial of Colonel Charters came on at the Old Bailey on the 25th of February, 1730, when every possible art and artifice were employed to injure the character of the poor girl who stood in the witness-box as prosecutrix, in order to destroy the value of her evidence ; but happily her character was shown to be *pur et sans reproche*. She bore her cross-examination without being shaken in the smallest detail ; and the result was that, after a long trial, the colonel was found guilty, and sentenced to be hung, drawn, and quartered, after the barbarous fashion of the day. Even now, however, when all hope of escape seemed at an end, good fortune or wealth or high Scotch connections stood his friend. His son-in-law, Lord Wemyss, summoned up from Edinburgh one of the most eloquent advocates of the date, afterwards known as the Lord President Forbes, to plead his cause before the Privy Council, and an estate of 300*l*. a year was settled on the President in reward for his services, which were so far successful as to induce the king to spare the life of the infamous wretch, whose only punishment in the end was that he was allowed to compromise the matter by settling an annuity on Anne Bond.

Soon after his conviction a fine mezzotint engraving of Colonel Charters was published, in which he is represented as standing at the bar of the Old Bailey, with his thumbs tied before him, and underneath the print is the following inscription :

> Blood !—must a colonel with a lord's estate
> Be thus obnoxious to a scoundrel's fate ?

[1] See 'Laurence, Earl Ferrers,' *ante*, p. 50.

Brought to the bar, and sentenced from the bench,
Only for cozening a country wench?—
Shall men of honour meet no more respect?
Shall their diversions thus by laws be check'd?
Shall they be accountable to saucy juries,
For this or t'other pleasure?—death and furies!
What man thro' villany would run a course,
And ruin families without remorse,
To heap up riches—if, when all is done,
An ignominious death he cannot shun?

But, though his life was spared at the Old Bailey, it was not destined to be for long. A few short months seem to have been in mercy allowed him for repentance. He returned to Edinburgh, but so broken in health and appearance that his old friends and acquaintances scarcely knew him again; and I may be quite safe in adding my belief that they did not much care to recognise him. He was not only a villain—that might have been pardonable and even pardoned, especially as he was rich and had high connections; but he was also a found-out, detected, and convicted villain, and 'society' therefore refused to whitewash him. He died in the following year, a victim, it is said, to his irregular course of life, but more probably to the clouds of grief and disappointment in which his days were drawing to their close. He ended his career of infamy in the year 1731, at the age of sixty-three.

He was buried in the family vault in the churchyard of the Grey Friars' Church at Edinburgh; but his vices had rendered him, in spite of his wealth and influence, so detested by the public at large, that it was only with great difficulty that he was laid in his grave, for the mob were hardly restrained from tearing his coffin in pieces, and vented in all sorts of irregularities and insults their feelings of honest contempt for such an abandoned character.

I leave it for my readers to infer from this story whether Dr. Croly is accurate or not when he states that Charters 'was hung by a denial of justice.' My own idea—as I said at the beginning of this paper—is that the words 'was hung' are

nothing but a clerical error for 'escaped hanging.' It only remains to add that the Earl of Wemyss, who up to that time had borne the family name of Wemyss, on his marriage with the only child of this evil-doer took the name of Charters, or, as they now write it, Charteris, which has ever since been borne by his descendants down to the present generation. Were I in their place, I would lose no time in applying to 'Lyon King of Arms' for royal leave and licence to throw aside the appellation assumed by their great-great-grandfather, and to revert to the old local name by which they had been known in Scotland nearly six hundred years ago. A nobleman who can trace his descent, if Sir Bernard Burke is not telling fables, up to a younger son of 'Macduff, Thane of Fife,' first Lord of the Barony of Wemyss or Weems, and the vanquisher of the tyrant Macbeth, methinks should hold to his own *cognomen*, and not stoop to pick up and adopt a shield so tarnished by past memories as that of Charters of Amisfield. For my own part, if the choice were given to me, I would rather be even plain 'Mr.' Wemyss of Wemyss than wear the coronet of an earl coupled with the surname of 'Charters' or 'Charteris.'

AN EPISODE IN THE HISTORY OF THE COURTENAYS

Beyond a question, the House of Courtenay enjoys a proud pre-eminence among the most noble and ancient of the historic families, both of England and of France. The chapter of his 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' which Gibbon devotes to a brief outline of the achievements of the Courtenays on both sides of the Channel, is of course familiar to every student of history and of heraldry; but its eloquence may plead my pardon if I quote from it here one or two passages, which will serve to throw into more striking contrast the 'episode' which I have now the pleasure of presenting to my readers.

Confessing that there is one line in France superior to the Courtenays in its origin, its alliances, and all that is comprised

in the wide-spreading term of 'achievements,' namely, the royal House of Bourbon, the historian claims for the Courtenays the next place in rank and precedence. They are said to be sprung from the marriage of Elizabeth of Courtenai with Peter, son of the French king, Louis le Gros, in the twelfth century, according to the ancient registers of Ford Abbey in Devonshire, to which the Courtenays were frequent and liberal benefactors. But, whether this be true or not, at all events they claim descent from one of the noble Frenchmen who in times before the Norman conquest held the castle of Courtenai, in the district of Gatinois, some fifty or sixty miles to the south of Paris ; and it is as certain as most matters in history that in the reign of our Henry II. one Reginald de Courtenay became distinguished in the camp and the councils of his sovereign. 'The right of wardship,' says Gibbon, 'enabled a feudal lord to reward his vassal with the marriage and estate of a noble heiress ; and so Reginald Courtenay acquired a fair establishment in Devonshire, where his posterity has been seated above six hundred years.' In proof of this statement he brings forward the fact that the wife of Reginald 'held the honour of Okehampton in that county by the service of ninety-three knights,' and that their son Robert married the sister of Rivers, or Redvers, Earl of Devon. At the end of a century, on the failure of the Redvers line, the great-grandson of Reginald, one Hugh Courtenay, succeeded to the title, which at that time was really a territorial dignity ; and a dozen or more Earls of Devonshire of the name of Courtenay have since flourished in a period of four hundred years. Gibbon adds :

'The Courtenays ranked, even in the middle ages, among the chief of the barons of the realm ; nor was it till after a strenuous dispute that they yielded to the fief of Arundel the first place in the Parliament of England. Their alliances were contracted with the noblest families—the Veres, Despensers, St. Johns, Talbots, Bohuns, and even the Plantagenets themselves ; and in a contest with John of Lancaster, a Courtenay,

Bishop of London and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, might be accused of profane confidence in the strength and number of his kindred. In peace, the Earls of Devon resided in their numerous castles and manors in the West; their ample revenue was appropriated to devotion and hospitality; and the epitaph of Edward, surnamed from his misfortunes the *blind*, from his virtues the *good* earl, inculcates with much ingenuity a moral sentence which may, however, be absurd by thoughtless generosity. After a grateful commemoration of the fifty-five years of union and happiness which he enjoyed with Mabel his wife, the good earl thus speaks from the tomb: "What we gave, we have; what we spent, we had; what we left, we lost."[1] But their *losses* in this sense were far superior to their gifts and expenses, and their heirs not less than the poor were the objects of their paternal care. The sums which they paid for livery and seisin attest the greatness of their possessions, and several estates have remained in their family since the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In war, the Courtenays of England fulfilled the duties and deserved the honours of chivalry. They were often entrusted to levy and command the militia of Devonshire and Cornwall; they often attended their supreme lord to the borders of Scotland; and in foreign service, for a stipulated price, they sometimes maintained fourscore men-at-arms and as many archers. By sea and land they fought under the standards of the Edwards and Henries; their names are conspicuous in battles, in tournaments, in the original list of the Order of the Garter. Three brothers shared the Spanish victory of the Black Prince; and in the lapse of six generations the English Courtenays had learned to despise the nation and country from which they derived their origin. In the quarrel of the two Roses the Earls of Devon adhered to the House of Lancaster, and three brothers successively died either in the field or on the scaffold.

[1] 'Cleveland,' p. 142. By some this epitaph is assigned to a Rivers, Earl of Devon; but the English denotes the fifteenth rather than the thirteenth century.

Their honours and estates were restored by Henry VII.; a daughter of Edward IV. was not disgraced by the nuptials of a Courtenay; their son, who was created Marquis of Exeter, enjoyed the favour of his cousin Henry VIII., and in the camp of Cloth of Gold he broke a lance against the French monarch. But the favour of Henry was the prelude of disgrace; his disgrace was the signal of death; and of the victims of the jealous tyrant the Marquis of Exeter is one of the most noble and guiltless. His son Edward lived a prisoner in the Tower, and died an exile at Padua; and the secret love of Queen Mary, whom he slighted, perhaps for the Princess Elizabeth, has shed a romantic colour on the story of this beautiful youth. The relics of his patrimony were conveyed into strange families by the marriages of his four aunts; and his personal honours, as if they had been legally extinct, were revived by the patents of succeeding princes. But there still survived a lineal descendant of Hugh the first Earl of Devon, a younger branch of the Courtenays, who had been seated at Powderham Castle above four hundred years, from the reign of Edward III. to the present hour. Their estates have been increased by the grant and improvement of lands in Ireland, and they have been recently restored to the honours of the peerage. Yet the Courtenays still retain the plaintive motto which asserts the innocence and deplores the fall of their ancient House.[1] While they sigh for past greatness, they are doubtless sensible of present blessings. In the long series of the Courtenay annals, the most splendid era is likewise the most unfortunate; nor can an opulent peer of Britain be inclined to envy the emperors of Constantinople, who wandered over Europe to solicit arms for the support of their dignity and the defence of their capital.'

[1] *Ubi lapsus? Quid feci?* a motto which was probably adopted by the Powderham branch after the loss of the earldom of Devonshire, &c. The primitive arms of the Courtenays were *Or, three torteaux gules*, which seem to denote their affinity with Godfrey of Bouillon and the ancient Counts of Boulogne.

But it is time for me to proceed to an account of the House of Courtenay in more recent days. It is well known that for no less than two hundred and seventy-five years, after the death of Edward Courtenay in 1556, the earldom of Devon lay dormant, and indeed was supposed to have became extinct, but that in the March of 1831 it was revived by the Crown and the House of Lords in favour of William Courtenay, of Powderham Castle, Devon, whose grandfather had been raised in 1762 to the Viscountcy of Courtenay—a title which, of course, he would never have accepted from George III. if he had known that his family was legally entitled to the higher and more ancient dignity. Indeed, it may be mentioned as a proof of the apparently utter extinction of the hopes of the Courtenays that in the interim the dukedom and earldom of Devonshire had been conferred upon the courtier family of Cavendish—a measure which would never have been carried into effect had the inherent rights of the Courtenays been brought home to the conscience of royalty. However, since the year 1831 the earldom of Devon has again adorned the roll of the House of Peers, and the late earl, who died in 1888, and who was many years a Member of Parliament for South Devonshire, and afterwards Secretary of the Poor Law Board, was a worthy representative of the accumulated honours of, shall I say three, four, or eight centuries.

In the year 1832, however, not long after the revival of the title, and when the rightful holder of the earldom of Devon was residing abroad, the county of Kent was suddenly astonished by the presence of a man of eccentric dress and appearance, who gave himself out as 'Sir William Percy Honywood Courtenay, Knight of Malta, a son of Lord Courtenay and heir of Lord Mount Cashell,' who took up his residence in the parish of Boughton-under-Blean, between Faversham and Canterbury. His real parentage, it was believed at the time, was somewhat more plebeian than the above designation would lead one to suppose; and, much as in our own days, a certain nameless individual *d'une famille tout à fait bourgeoise* at

Perpignan suddenly blossomed into the 'Duc de Roussillon,' just so it was discovered that 'Sir William Courtenay, Knight of Malta,' was none other than a crackbrained fellow from the far West, one 'Mr. John A. Thom,' who had hitherto earned an honest livelihood as a small spirit merchant and maltster at Truro, in Cornwall. The first rumours of him in Kent date from the Michaelmas of 1832, when report said that an eccentric person, who had recently been known in London by the name of Thompson, was staying at the Rose Inn at Canterbury, and passing at one time as 'Count Rothschild,' and at another as 'Sir William Courtenay.'

The countenance and costume of this personage were both such as gave the idea of his being of foreign extraction, though his language showed that he was too well acquainted with England and the English to be really a foreigner. However, partly by his fine figure and person, partly by his rich and eccentric dress, and partly by broad and boastful assertions of his intimacy with royal and noble personages, he succeeded in duping a large number even of the respectable portion of the citizens into a belief that, like 'Theudas and Judas' of old, he was 'somebody.' Like most adventurers, he proclaimed that he was destined, or at all events desirous, to regenerate society, and issued a small periodical fly-sheet called *The Lion*, in which he gave vent to some very strange opinions, which were in reality subversive of society in Church and State. He railed especially against the tithe system, as having been founded by the Pope, who was instigated to it by the devil. He was loud in his praises of 'purity of election;' and, though the Reform Bill had only recently been passed, he pretended to consider that the British Constitution in King, Lords, and Commons was in danger, and required the aid of all honest patriots in both Houses of Parliament. Giving loud utterance to these views in his fly-sheet and at pot-house meetings in Canterbury and the adjoining towns and villages, in the course of a little time he contrived to gull the credulous multitude who were as ready to see in him a veritable 'Courtenay' from

the West country as the mob has shown itself of late to recognise in Arthur Orton the veritable Roger Tichborne, whom his own family and the Peerage writers believed to have been drowned in the Pacific some twenty years before. However, be this as it may, the gaping multitude were so far awed into a belief of the talents and statesmanship of their newly-found 'Knight of Malta,' that when, at the general election of December 1832, there was a contest for the city of Canterbury, the 'show of hands' was declared to be in his favour ; and he actually polled no less than 375 against the 800 and odd votes which returned his opponents—Lord Fordwich and Mr. R. Watson—to Parliament. On this occasion, we are told by one of the Kentish papers that Sir William Courtenay presented himself to the citizens of Canterbury in a most extraordinary guise, bounding over the heads of the people in front of him, and alighting on the table in the centre of the Hall in a theatrical attitude, quite *à la* Kean. His costume, too, added to the effect of the scene, being composed of crimson velvet and gold, with a cap and mantle to correspond, silk stockings of the same colour, and Turkish slippers. He is thus described in a letter written by a lady living at Canterbury at the time :

'A Sir William Courtenay has been haranguing the populace here almost daily with novel and ludicrous addresses. He is encased in a superb dress of crimson velvet, richly ornamented with gold lacings, tassels, and epaulettes ; and he goes about armed with a valuable sword and a dagger, which he occasionally threatens to use against any person who happens to interrupt him. It is given out publicly here, and the ladies believe it, that his dress cost him upwards of two hundred pounds, and that it was made for him by a West-end tailor while he was staying at the Clarendon Hotel in Bond Street. Although he is considered handsome his face is much disfigured by a superabundance of moustache and beard.'

'It was impossible,' writes one who was present, 'to follow

with anything like precision the fluent, disjointed, yet occasionally brilliant sentences which fell from his lips. Suffice it to say that he promised his hearers all sorts of impossible things; he would reform the newly reformed House of Commons; he would abolish tithes; he would remove the burden of taxation from the shoulders of the poor and place it on those of the rich; he would sweep away Corporations, and render the choice of Aldermen and of Members of the House of Commons more agreeable to modern ideas; and finally, appealing to an argument which will always find ready listeners among the poorer classes, he promised them a speedy return to the good old times when bread was cheap, and when roast beef and plum pudding and nut-brown ale were constant visitors at every cottager's table.'

The writer adds:

'During the whole of the proceedings the utmost confusion prevailed, though less than the usual amount of political feeling was observable, the whole of the attention of the mob being concentrated on the "Knight of Malta," whose fine dress and still finer promises secured him the lion's share of the popular favour.'

Indeed, it will scarcely be credited when I add that the popular enthusiasm in his favour on the nomination-day rose to such a height that crowds not only flocked round the wheels and doors of his chariot, but absolutely took out the horses from the traces and drew him in triumph to the Rose Inn, where he again addressed the multitude from the balcony, repeating his promises of speedy universal reform. On this occasion Sir William picked up an acquaintance with two young Kentish gentlemen, named Robinson and Denne. The latter, indeed (who proposed him at his contest for Canterbury), was a member of one of the oldest and most respectable families in East Kent, from whose pockets he contrived to extract considerable sums of money, which helped to supply him with horses and a carriage to ride and drive about the streets in the course of his canvass.

After the poll had been officially declared, and when the new members had returned their thanks to the constituency, 'Sir William' again addressed the mob from the table and from the steps of the hall, and then, after parading the town with fifes and drums, once more harangued them from the balcony of the Rose, his head-quarters, promising to meet them on Barham Downs on the following Monday, when the unwashed herd of rural voters were again treated to a repetition of the same wild rhapsody. At Barham Downs he was proposed as a candidate for the Eastern Division of the county: but his defeat there was far more decisive than it had been at Canterbury, as he polled scarcely ten or a dozen votes.

It was, however, at a large political dinner given to the poorer class of reformers in a field near the Dane John in that city, that he first betrayed the earliest symptoms of that violent and outrageous temper which ultimately led to his death.

Early in the following year an event occurred which must have opened the eyes of such of 'Sir William's' followers who had any sense or reason in their pates. He had resolved that, as he could not take a borough town by storm in 1832, he would use every effort to captivate the affections of the lower orders, so as to stand a better chance at the next election. Accordingly, he caused it to be made known that, great as was his rank, his condescension was much greater, and that he liked nothing so much as to sit down and eat and drink at the tables of the labouring peasants. He would join the lowest of gatherings in pot-houses, and though dressed in an eccentric garb, borrowed from the green-room of a theatre, he preferred the company of the poor Kentish cottager to that of his own relatives, the proud Courtenays of Devon, and their aristocratic and haughty connections. So thick were his invitations, so numerous his engagements, and so great the calls upon his time, that, like Arthur Orton, he was obliged to ride or drive from house to house, picking up a crust here and a bit of bread and cheese there, and generally concluding the day by a supper in

company with some of his new-made friends in a village club-room.

In the February following the general election of December, 1832, a brief but smart action took place near the Goodwin Sands, a few miles off the coast of Deal, between a revenue cruiser, the 'Lively,' and a smuggling-boat called the 'Admiral Hood.' The crew of the latter were captured, and both crew and boat were taken to Rochester for adjudication in the regular course of law. On boarding the smuggler no contraband goods were found, but during the chase the crew were seen by the officers on board the 'Lively' to throw overboard certain tubs, which were marked and picked up by the crew of the cruiser. On the examination of the prisoners before the magistrates at Rochester, 'Sir William' made his appearance in the court, attired in a grotesque costume, and wearing a small sword or scimetar, hung from his neck by a massive gold chain. It strikes one as a sad pity that at this time the photographic art was unknown to the public, and that the 'Illustrated London News' was as yet unborn, or I should be able to treat my readers with a more lifelike description of the scene in court. On one of the men being examined, the 'Knight of Malta' stepped forward, and, with all the address of an artful and practised demagogue, declared that, as the man was undefended, he would become his advocate. But the knight was a better hustings orator than a lawyer, and the fellow was convicted. A professional gentleman from London undertook the defence of the rest of the smugglers, when 'Sir William' presented himself as a witness, and swore that he himself saw with his own eyes the whole transaction between the 'Lively' and the 'Admiral Hood,' and was positive that the tubs said to have been thrown overboard from the latter vessel had been floating about hither and thither in the Downs all the morning, and that consequently the 'Admiral Hood' and her crew were innocent of smuggling. The object of this assertion was evidently, of course, to prove that the men under accusation were entitled to be set at liberty, as free from all

guilt in the matter. The solicitors for His Majesty's Customs, however, took a more serious view of the matter, and, having undoubted evidence that the testimony of the 'Knight of Malta' was false, they resolved to prosecute him for perjury.

They did so, and the trial came on at Maidstone before Mr. Justice Parke, on July 25, 1833, when it was proved by the clergyman and other respectable witnesses of Broughton, that at the very day and hour of the action between the 'Lively and the 'Admiral Hood' (Sunday, February 17), the madcap knight was comfortably seated in a pew at Boughton Church, listening to the parson's sermon. But the laws of time and space stand as little in the way of sham 'Knights of Malta' as the laws of moral and social existence do in the way of sham marquises, *soi-disant* dukes, apocryphal princes, and would-be baronets.

The end of the trial was that Sir William Percy Honywood Courtenay, Knight of Malta, alias 'John Thom,' disgraced the noble name which he had borrowed like a jackdaw, being convicted by a jury of twelve honest English citizens of perjury—not of that venial kind which is of frequent occurrence at elections, or in 'testimonials to character,' or in the buying and selling of horses, but of perjury, 'wilful and corrupt.' The sentence passed upon him was that he should be imprisoned for three months, and after the expiration of that time should be transported beyond the seas for seven years more. Before the term of his imprisonment was over, it was found that 'Sir William' was out of his senses, and he was accordingly transferred to the Kentish Lunatic Asylum at Barming, near Maidstone. Here he was confined for some years, until, his mental condition appearing gradually to improve, he was allowed to take up his residence at the house of a farmer at Boughton, near his former residence. While here he appeared more tranquil and calm ; but early in the summer of 1838, while occupying rooms at a lonely farmhouse, kept by a man named Culver, on the top of Boughton Hill, about five miles from Canterbury, he was found to show symptoms of a return of his mental aberration.

Among other matters, he would declaim in loud and unmeasured terms amongst the rustic visitors against the iniquities of the new Poor Law, and the grievances under which they laboured as a class; but in the end he would generally work round to his commonplaces about a 'cheap loaf' and the abolition of tithes. At length his madness led him and some of his deluded followers into an act of open riot, and riot in its turn led to bloodshed, which put an end to the mad doings of this *soi-disant* scion of the noble House of Courtenay.

On Monday, May 28, 1838, having met some of his silly dupes at Boughton, he sallied out into the street at their head, and, having bought a loaf of bread, stuck it on the top of a pole, which the country bumpkins in his train paraded along the road to Fairbrook and Goodneston, with flags flying before them, bearing the cognisance of the Courtenay lion. The number of the mob speedily increased, and with their numbers their excitement also gathered strength. Like madmen as they were, they cried aloud that they had 'bloody work' before them; so they endeavoured, though without success, to perform the heroic task of setting fire to a beanstack—a magnificent exploit for a 'Courtenay.' On this 'Sir William' got into a passion, and vowed that he would himself 'strike the bloody blow,' though where and at what he did not condescend to say.

Passing on next to Herne Hill, with the number of his dupes continually increasing, and having taken some refreshments at a pothouse, they made their way to Dargate Common, a straggling hamlet of labourers' cottages, where the leader divested himself of his shoes, knelt down among his followers, and prayed for half an hour at the top of his voice, 'lifting up his voice to heaven,' and denouncing everybody and everything in unmeasured terms. At the end of their devotions the bumpkins went off to Bossenden Farm, where they got some supper, several of them sleeping in the barn and the rest under hedges. At daylight on the following morning (Tuesday) they mustered by the side of the high

road, and walked in procession to Sittingbourne, nine miles distant, to breakfast, with the loaf on the pole and the flags carried in front as before. Breakfast over, they marched through the villages of Newnham, Eastling, Throwley, Seldwich, Lees, and Selling, occasionally stopping for refreshments, and from place to place adding to their numbers, their infatuated leader addressing his dupes from time to time, and urging them on to fresh acts of disorder and riot. At night they retreated into a chalk-pit, where the programme of the previous evening was repeated in respect of both prayers and threats of 'bloody work.' After parading through other villages on the following day, Wednesday, in the evening 'Sir William' and his motley crowd came back to Calver's Farm at Bossenden. Here was destined to be the end of the 'Knight's' mad expedition. It appears that a farmer named Carling, who lived under the hill, went off to the magistrates with a complaint that Thom and his comrades-in-arms had seduced some of his labourers from their work, and requesting that the rioters might be apprehended. A constable named Mears was sent with two others to arrest 'Sir William,' who no sooner saw the agent of the law and found out his mission than he shot him dead. The other two constables, seeing that it would be madness to wage war against such odds—for some of the country louts were armed with pistols and others with bludgeons—returned to the magistrates, who sent off to Maidstone and Canterbury for the help of the military. The whole neighbourhood was now fully alarmed, and great was the joy and relief of the respectable inhabitants of the place when a company of a hundred soldiers of the 45th Regiment arrived on the spot, under the command of an officer, Lieutenant Bennett.

On reaching the place where the rebels were mustered, the magistrate entreated the people to disperse quietly to their homes, and on their refusal ordered the Riot Act to be read. By this time 'Sir William' and his followers had retreated to a deep part of the wood near Bossenden, known as the 'osier

bed,' where they resolved to make a desperate stand. 'Sir William'—who had already fired one shot, though happily without effect, at a magistrate, the Rev. Charles Handley, of Herne Hill, for attempting to take him into custody—now exhorted his poor crazy dupes in Scriptural language to 'quit themselves like men,' and 'not to count their lives dear' to them. Lieutenant Bennett at once went up to him at the head of his men, and commanded him in the Queen's name to surrender; but 'Sir William's' only answer was to draw out his pistol and shoot him through the heart. He had scarcely fallen to the ground when the military fired and closed with the rebels, several of whom, including the 'Knight of Malta,' were killed on the spot, while many others were more or less severely wounded. Some of the louts ran off across the fields as fast as their legs would carry them; but such of the ringleaders as were not killed were at all events secured, and before evening they were marched off to Canterbury and lodged in St. Agustine's jail. Thus, in only a few minutes, ten lives were lost, and several of the rustics were rendered cripples for the remainder of their days. It is to be hoped that such of the misguided band as were wounded, but may chance to be still surviving, have not yet forgotten the lesson which they learnt on that day, to stick to their home duties as peaceful citizens, or, if they must go to war, to fight under the standard of their Queen and country, and not under that of John Thom, or of any other spurious scion of the house of Courtenay.

At the following assizes at Maidstone two of Thom's followers were found guilty of having had a hand in the murders of the constable and Lieutenant Bennett, and were sentenced to transportation for life; while others who had taken a less prominent part in the outbreak were dealt with according to their deserts. It will be long, however, I fancy, before the 'bloody work' of 'Sir William Percy Honywood Courtenay, Knight of Malta, son of Lord Courtenay, and heir of Lord Mount Cashell,' will be forgotten in the neighbour-

hood of Faversham, Sittingbourne, and Canterbury; and many a year must elapse before even a genuine 'Courtenay' will venture to come from Powderham Castle in the far West to contest a seat either for a division of the fair county of Kent or for the first Christian city in the kingdom.

As a proof of the strong feeling which a popular delusion like that of the madman Thom will excite in the gullible British public, I may perhaps be allowed to bring this 'episode' to an end with the following quotation from the last chapter of Dr. C. Mackay's most interesting work on 'Popular Delusions.' While treating of the subject of relics and relic-worship, he quotes the case of 'Sir William Courtenay' as a remarkable instance of the extent to which relic-hunting is occasionally carried, even in this Protestant country, and in the middle of this nineteenth century. He writes:

'When the maniac Thom or Courtenay was shot, in the spring of 1838, the relic-hunters were immediately in motion to obtain a memento of so extraordinary an individual. His long black beard and hair, which were cut off by the surgeons, fell into the hands of his disciples, by whom they were treasured with the utmost reverence. A lock of his hair commanded a great price, not only among his followers, but among the more wealthy inhabitants of Canterbury and its neighbourhood. The tree against which he fell when he was shot was stripped of all its bark by the curious, while a letter with his signature to it was paid for in gold coins, and his favourite horse became as celebrated as its master. Parties of ladies and gentlemen went to Boughton from a distance of a hundred and fifty miles, to visit the scene of that fatal affray, and stroke on the back the horse of the "mad Knight of Malta." If a strict watch had not been kept over his grave for months, the body would have been disinterred, and the bones carried away as memorials.'

The whole affair, I may add, would have been extremely amusing as an 'episode,' if it were not for its tragical ending, and also for the melancholy reflection that, towards the middle

of the nineteenth century, nearly four hundred persons could be found, in one of the oldest cathedral cities in the kingdom, weak enough to put their trust and confidence in such a hair-brained madman. Verily the *soi-disant* 'Knight of Malta' fairly outdoes in ludicrous absurdity the whole of our modern *soi-disant* adventurers, whether native or foreign, knights, counts, dukes, and princes, or butcher-baronets.

THE HOUSE OF BERKELEY

The noble House of Berkeley has disputed for three centuries, against the Somersets, Dukes of Beaufort, the position of the leaders and chief landowners in Gloucestershire. They descend, or claim descent, from Robert Fitz-Harding, whose father, or probably grandfather, was one of the comrades-in-arms of the Conqueror, and who himself in the twelfth century, in reward of his loyalty to the Empress Maud and her son Henry I., obtained the lordship of Berkeley, of which Roger de Berkeley, its previous owner, had been divested by the royal will, Sir Bernard Burke mentions of this Robert de Berkeley that he 'entertained at Bristol in 1168 Dermot M'Murrough, King of Leinster, with sixty of his retinue, at the time when that prince came over from Ireland to solicit succour from Henry II.' His son Maurice was wise enough to secure his position, in case of a change in the dynasty or in the will of his royal master, by marrying Alice, the fair daughter of one of the old divested line ; but, in spite of this sage precaution, the lands and castle of Berkeley were more than once in peril during the lifetime of his eldest son, through the vacillating and uncertain temper of King John, who first seized on his broad acres, and then assigned them to the burgesses of Bristol, in order to keep their castle in repair. In the long run, however, John's reign and Robert de Berkeley's life both came to an end, and the latter's brother,

Thomas, obtained a fresh grant of Berkeley Castle in 1223. From him the male descent of the house of Berkeley is as clear and direct as can be, down to the present century at least. Why I do not say 'down to the present day' will be shown in the sequel.

Maurice, the eldest son and successor of Thomas de Berkeley, was summoned by Henry III. to London in order to aid him against his turbulent barons; but the Lord of Berkeley was either too little of a courtier or too strong a Liberal to stick by the king when the king was wrong, so he joined the standard of the barons, and saw his lands again seized by the Crown. His son Thomas, however, regained the favour of royalty, and basked in its sunshine, attending his sovereign at Kenilworth and in his wars against the refractory Welsh. For these services Burke tells us that he had from Edward I. 'liberty to hunt the fox, hare, badger, and wild cat, with his own dogs within the king's forest of Mendip and in the chase of Kingswood.' He was at the siege of Caerlaverock, and summoned to Parliament as a baron, as was also his son and successor Maurice, chief justice in South Wales, governor of the castles of Gloucester and Berwick, and steward of the Duchy of Aquitaine. He died, however, a prisoner in Wallingford Castle; and it was his son and successor Thomas, the third baron, during whose ownership of Berkeley King Edward II. was murdered within his castle. The room where that black deed was done, high up in one of the towers, is still shown to the curious visitor; but it is only right to add that Lord Berkeley, though accused of complicity in the murder, was in the event honourably acquitted.

From him I pass over three generations, and come to William, the seventh baron, who was created Marquis of Berkeley, but who, dying childless in 1492, made Henry VII. his heir; so that Berkeley Castle became an appanage of the Tudor sovereigns, and reverted to the Berkeleys only on the death of Edward VI., when Henry, who was rightfully

twelfth Baron of Berkeley, once more was installed in the castle of his ancestors—

> And Berkeley's right and Berkeley's might
> Did meet on Berkeley's Castle height.

This nobleman's great-grandson was created Earl of Berkeley in 1679, and the coronet came by regular descent to Frederick Augustus, fifth earl, who held the title from 1755 down to his death in 1810. About him I have a good deal to say.

This Frederick Augustus was Earl of Berkeley without dispute, and the owner of the proud Castle of Berkeley. At the commencement of the year 1810 the old earl's eldest son, and who as such bore the courtesy title of Lord Dursley, held a seat in the House of Commons as one of the members for Gloucestershire. He had been born in September 1786, and the date is important. On learning the news of his father's death in the following August, he presented to the Crown a petition for a writ of summons as Earl of Berkeley; but, as doubts were known to exist as to the validity of the marriage on which the petitioner's right to the peerage rested, the Prince Regent ordered his claim to be referred to the consideration of the House of Peers. The next step was a formal 'inquiry,' and a regular 'Peerage case' followed. The antecedents of the late earl and his countess were raked up, witnesses were examined at length *pro* and *con*, and in the issue their lordships, having investigated the matter at length, came to the conclusion of passing a resolution 'that the petitioner had not at that time made good his claim to the earldom of Berkeley.' His case, it must be owned, was extremely hard; for, as being the reputed eldest son and heir of the earl his father, he was held to have vacated his seat in the Lower House of Parliament, while the Upper House quietly shut its doors in his face.

The cause of this decision, as usual, was an irregular marriage; in such matters of dispute there is always 'sure to be a lady in the case.' The facts, as they stand revealed to

us in the pages of the 'Berkeley Peerage Case,' form quite a romance, and may possibly interest my readers, though I fear I must plead guilty to the charge of telling a 'thrice-told tale.'

It appears, then, that late in the autumn of 1784, or at the beginning of the following year, the earl, happening to be on a visit at Gloucester, some twenty miles distant as the crow flies from his castle at Berkeley, was smitten with the charms of a certain Miss Mary Cole, the daughter of a butcher in that city. He wooed her, not without success—an event not quite improbable considering that he was scarcely middle-aged, could boast a rent-roll of 50,000*l.* a year, and had a countess's coronet at his disposal But if he secured her heart, there is unfortunately no proof now extant that he gave her his hand with such an amount of formality as would establish a marriage in England, whatever it might do 'north of the Tweed.'

However, be this as it may, the earl took the lady back with him to Berkeley, where she ruled for many years as mistress of the castle, styling herself and styled by others as 'My Lady Berkeley.' The lady herself who stood in this doubtful position always asserted, on behalf of her eldest son and of his three next brothers, that, though they were born previous to the public solemnisation of a marriage between the earl and herself in May 1796, she had been privately married to his lordship more than ten years previously ; and the same fact, it is only fair to add, was affirmed under oath in her husband's last will and testament. But it does not do to play at matrimony—it is too serious a matter for a game ; and so Lady Berkeley and her children learned by the sad experience of a lesson which they had taught to them during half a century and more. In order to establish the assertion of Lady Berkeley and her husband's oath, it was necessary to bring forward the register of the parish church of Berkeley. The entry was accordingly produced before the House of Lords ; but on inspection it was found that it was written,

not on a page of the register, but on an inserted slip of paper or parchment, or on a leaf that had been for many years pasted down in the volume until it should be wanted. The question as to the genuineness or spuriousness of this most important document could not, or at all events did not, come formally before the House of Lords till after the death of the earl. Unfortunately, at that time the clergyman who—as it was said—had solemnised the first marriage was dead ; and, on being appealed to, his widow declared that she did not believe the entry to be in her husband's handwriting. A brother of the countess deposed that he was present at the marriage as a witness ; but he had, of course, an interest in his sister's good name and honour, and so his oath was not allowed to outweigh the strong evidence in the opposite direction. The testimony of the countess herself, too, was contradicted by that of her mother, who had married as her second husband a Mr. Glossop, of Osbournby, in Lincolnshire, and who, though born in a humble sphere of existence, lived to see her three daughters, one a countess, the second the wife of a general officer, and the third married to a nephew of the late Sir T. Baring.

Such was the state of the case as revealed upon the presentation of the petition of 'William Fitzhardinge Berkeley, commonly called Viscount Dursley,' claiming to be called to the House of Peers in his father's stead as sixth Earl of Berkeley. The inquiry, was therefore reopened ; for, though mooted during the fifth earl's lifetime, it had been abandoned on finding no legal question could arise until after his decease. And then, as I have stated, the proof adduced of the legitimacy of the four eldest sons was not held by the collective wisdom of the House of Peers to be 'at that time' sufficient to establish his claim.

The result was that, although no formal adverse decision was arrived at expressly negativing his claim, the matter was adjourned *sine die* ; and, practically, 'Lord Dursley' was obliged to drop his courtesy title. As a consequence he

retired from public life, being neither a regular 'Peer' nor a regular 'Commoner,' and became known in sporting and gaming circles, and generally in fashionable life, as Colonel Berkeley, being in command of the South Gloucestershire Militia.

I have in my autograph collection two specimens of his writing signed 'Dursley' and 'W. F. Berkeley;' and I have also seen a 'frank' which he signed 'Berkeley,' no doubt in good faith, supposing himself to have succeeded to his father's earldom. I suppose that this signature is unique; at all events, I cannot persuade the friend who owns it to part with it to me at any price.[1]

But I must return to Colonel Berkeley. The family estate of Berkeley Castle did not happen to be entailed, as is usual in such cases, on the title; so Colonel Berkeley, though he could not take up the earl's coronet, remained in undisputed possession of the castle, which was bequeathed to him by his father. This, with its large rent-roll, gave him very extensive influence as a landowner in the West of England, as the only individual who could keep in check, in the Whig or Liberal interest, the power of the Tory Dukes of Beaufort in Gloucestershire and in Bristol, with both of which constituencies they had been connected for centuries. Though spending the greater part of his life in the hunting-field and on the racecourse, in the green-rooms of the London theatres, and in gambling-rooms in St. James's, he was able to maintain his position in the West of England on the whole so well, that when in 1831 the Liberal party were on the look-out for eligible men among the large landowners to raise to the Peerage, in order to enable them the more easily to carry the first Reform Bill, Colonel Berkeley was offered and accepted a baron's coronet from Lord Grey, and in September 1831, at the time of the coronation of King William, entered as Lord Segrave the doors of the House of Lords, which had been for

[1] Since writing the above, I have myself become possessed of another specimen.

twenty years closed against him as Earl of Berkeley. The operation of the Reform Act of the following year, instead of at all limiting his territorial influence, went far towards doubling it, inasmuch as he was generally able to secure at least one of the two seats in Parliament for the Eastern as well as for the Western Division of Gloucestershire—a seat which was usually held by one of his relatives—to say nothing of another for Cheltenham, another for Gloucester, and another for Bristol. Holding thus, in effect, no less than four if not five seats in the Lower House, and one in the Upper, it was not a matter of wonder that in 1841, before Lord Melbourne and the Whigs retired from office, he secured his advancement to an earl's coronet ; not, however, by the adjudication of the ancient earldom of Berkeley in his favour, but by the bestowal of a new patent as Earl Fitzhardinge.

Thus, disappointed in early life, and, as he doubtless felt, being legally robbed of the coronet which was rightfully his own, he lived till old age unmarried, and, dying in 1857, bequeathed his castle and estates to his next brother, Admiral Sir Maurice Berkeley, who made an attempt, though without success, to get himself recognised by the House of Peers as Baron of Berkeley, in virtue of his actual tenure of Berkeley Castle, and quite apart from any creation by grant or patent. His brother's claim to the earldom of Berkeley he never reopened ; but shortly before his death he was created Baron Fitzhardinge, a title which now belongs to his son, along with the castle of Berkeley. His next two brothers, Henry and Augustus, being dead, although no positive decision had been arrived at by the Peers in the 'great Berkeley Peerage case,' there is no doubt that the fifth brother, Mr. Moreton Berkeley, became virtually Earl of Berkeley, though he steadily declined to assume the title, not being able to do so except by allowing that the first marriage of his mother was a farce and imposture. As he lived and died unmarried, the earldom passed to a cousin, whose son now holds the earldom, though he does not own the proud castle, of Berkeley.

THE ROMANCE OF THE HOUSE OF ASHBROOK

THE Flowers, who enjoy the honours of the Irish peerage as Viscounts and Barons Ashbrook, and who, in the present century, have become allied by marriage with one of the proudest and noblest ducal houses in the land, namely, that of Marlborough, are not, I have reason to believe, at all ashamed of a slight dash of plebeian blood which, about a century ago, became by accident intermixed with their *sang azul*. Whether they are of Norman or of Saxon origin I will not undertake to say for certain, though I incline to the belief that there were 'flowers' of many kinds in England before the Norman Conquest; and the heralds tell us no more than that they were formerly seated near Oakham, in Rutlandshire, which county they represented in Parliament as far back as the reign of Richard II., when one of the Flowers was not only M.P. for Rutland, but also the first Commoner in the land, being chosen to fill the Speaker's chair.

It appears that in the reign of Elizabeth one of these Rutlandshire Flowers went over to Ireland as a soldier of fortune, and distinguished himself in the wars against the natives, as also did his son, who became Governor of Dublin during the Irish Rebellion, in the reign of Charles I. His son and his grandson became the owners of Castle Durrow, in the county of Kilkenny, and the latter holding a seat in the Irish Parliament, won a peer's coronet under George I.

This nobleman and his son were each born, married, and died, and 'slept with their fathers,' after the usual fashion: but about his grandson William, the third Baron and second Viscount Ashbrook, I have a little tale to tell which will interest such of my readers as are fond of romantic incident, and who have not forgotten the story of Mr. Cecil and his humble-born bride, who found herself one day Countess of Exeter and Mistress of Burleigh,

Burleigh House, near Stamford Town.

This young nobleman, when scarcely out of his teens, or, at all events, when very young, and residing as a student at Oxford, was struck with the beauty of a peasant-girl named Betty or Elizabeth Ridge, whose father was in the habit of punting a ferry-boat across the Thames, or rather I should say the Isis, at Northmoor, in the vicinity of Cumnor, near Oxford the village made so famous by Sir Walter Scott in his 'Kenilworth' as the home of Amy Robsart. The love-sick youth took every opportunity of cultivating the society of his beloved water-nymph, but carefully concealed from his parents the impression which she had made upon his susceptible heart.

He was at that time an undergraduate of some college in the University, it is said of Magdalen College ; but he was too young to think of matrimony, nor was the object of his affection either old enough or sufficiently educated to become his wife. She had been reared among the peasant class, and was wholly uninformed in matters of the world, though she could read and write pretty well, as is proved by her signature 'Betty Rudge' in the Register Book of Marriages at Northmoor ; but the young collegian fancied that, in spite of these disadvantages, he could perceive an aptitude of mind and soundness of intellect united with great amiableness of temper in addition to her personal perfections. Under these circumstances he conceived the romantic idea of submitting her to the superintendence of some respectable lady capable of rendering her, through the influence of education, an associate suitable to his wishes and to his rank. The lovely ferry-girl was accordingly placed under the tuition of a lady, a few miles off, at whose house Ensign Flower occasionally visited her, and where he marked from time to time, with all the enthusiasm of a romantic lover, her progress in various polite accomplishments. Elizabeth Rudge remained in this situation for about three years, when the efflux of time, as well as some domestic occurrences, conspired in enabling Capt. Flower to reap the reward of his constancy and honourable conduct by a matrimonial union ; and so the knot was tied, the blessing was

given, and the blushing daughter of the ferryman became ultimately the Viscountess Ashbrook and Lady of the Castle of Durrow, on whose walls her early charms are still commemorated in an authentic portrait. By the Viscount she had several sons and daughters, among the former two who each succeeded to the Viscountcy in turn ; and the daughter of one of these sons, the peasant-girl's grandchild, was married to George, fifth Duke of Marlborough, the lord of princely Blenheim.

The peasant-girl, ennobled in the manner related above, showed herself in after life well worthy of the promotion which she had gained, and died early in the present century at a good old age, honoured and loved by all her husband's family.

A friend of mine, who was for some years curate of the parish of Northmoor, has kindly sent me the following memoranda as a supplement to the story as told by myself :

'The living, as you know, belongs to St. John's College Oxford, and when, as one of the Junior Fellows, I was appointed to it in 1839, I can well remember looking through the registers, and being much struck with the strangeness of a marriage, where the bridegroom signed himself "Ashbrook" and the bride signed herself (not indeed by her mark, but in her own hand) "Betty (not Elizabeth) Rudge." On inquiring of the Nalders, who were an old family residing there and who were our College tenants, they told me they remembered her sister, who was married, and who lived to a good old age, and who always flattered herself that if Lord Ashbrook, or, as he then was, Mr. Flower, had seen her before her sister he would have chosen her in preference for his bride. From what I could learn by tradition, Mr. Flower was a gentleman-commoner of Magdalen College, and coming over there to fish occasionally, was brought into contact with the ferryman's daughter, and this ended in their marriage. He afterwards erected in the parish, at the riverside, a large quadrangular building, one portion of which existed in my time, and was

let in cottages, the rest having been pulled down. I never heard anything to the contrary of Betty Rudge being a good and devoted wife, and it is very possible that the education mentioned by you might have been bestowed upon her to make her more suitable for the mistress of a gentleman's household. She was also, doubtless, the ancestress of the Duchess of Marlborough. I remember in my younger and more imaginative days, it always struck me as a romantic history, and as I used to wander along the banks of the Isis at Northmoor, on the summer evenings when I was in my parish, I used to picture to myself her waiting so anxiously to ferry Mr. Flower over on his way back to College, and thought it might form the basis of an interesting story for one of the Magazines; but I never got further, and am glad that you have placed the story on record permanently. I think she must be credited not only with superior personal attractions, but also with a high tone of moral principle, to have induced her *inamorato* to make her his wife. I do not know whether she lived long, or what was the place of her death or her burial.'

I may add that I am told that in the parish of Shellingford, near Farringford, Berkshire, there is a tablet to Lady Ashbrook's daughter or grand-daughter, connecting her with the Marlborough family. There is a portrait of her to be seen at Castle Durrow, as stated above.

ROMANCE OF THE TOWNSHENDS

We need not go very far afield, in dealing with the 'great families,' for proofs of the old adage which tells us that 'truth is stranger than fiction.' Facts have often proved it, and still continue to prove it, to be in reality 'stranger;' as I shall show my readers by recalling to their memories some events which happened in the family of the Marquis Townshend early in the present century, and which were all brought before the eyes and ears of the public by proceedings in the

Upper House of Parliament somewhat less than half a century ago, when the titles and estates of an ancient and honourable house in Norfolk, Hertfordshire, and Staffordshire had a narrow escape from passing into the hands of the illegitimate issue of a Huntingdonshire brewer.

The Townshends, now Marquises and Viscounts Townshend,[1] Lords Raynham, &c., in the peerage of the United Kingdom, according to Collins, are an old family of genuine Norman extraction, being sprung from one Louis or Ludovic, a follower of the Conqueror, who soon after the Conquest married a Saxon maiden, Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Thomas Haywell. His great-grandson, Sir Thomas de Townshend, married a Norfolk heiress, and was buried in 'the Chyrche of the White Friers of our Ladye of Mt. Carmel,' between Fleet Street and the Thames. His son and heir, Sir Roger Townshend, following his example, found a wife in Norfolk, and lies buried, according to his last will and testament, in the parish church of Raynham in that county, 'in the middle or body of the church, before the image of the crucifix of our Lord.' He appears to have become possessed, either by marriage or by purchase, of the estate of Raynham, which has ever since been the chief home of the family. He died in 1465.

The fortune of the house thus begun was completed by his son and successor, Sir Roger, who rose to eminence in the legal profession, becoming Reader in Law at Lincoln's Inn, M.P. for Calne, a Serjeant-at-law, and at length one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas. His daughters made what must have been the best matches of the time in their native county among the Bedingfelds, the Wodehouses, the Castells, and the Windhams. For several generations the

[1] Besides the Marquisate of Townshend, a younger branch of the family now hold the earldom of Sydney, and only a few years since they enjoyed also the earldom of Leicester, and the barony of Bayning, a title recently extinct through the failure of heirs male. The same fate apparently awaits Lord Sydney's title in the course of time. (Since this was written Lord Sydney has died.—E. W.)

Townshends,[1] as they had now begun to spell their name, lived as country squires on their Norfolk estates at Raynham and Brampton down to the reign of Elizabeth, when we find John Townshend, Esq., of Raynham, M.P. for Castle Rising, receiving the honour of knighthood in reward of the valour which he displayed at the capture of Cadiz under the Earl of Essex, his brother being shortly after knighted by King James I. at the Charter House. A baronetcy conferred by the same sovereign on the head of the family in the next generation took the Townshends out of the untitled into the ranks of the titled nobility ; and their connection with the Court was further confirmed by their election in successive Parliaments as representatives of Norfolk, or of Castle Rising or King's Lynn, in Parliament, to say nothing of the discharge of the duties of the shrievalty.

The third baronet, Sir Horatio, having borne an active part in the support of the royal cause, and afterwards in the recall of Charles II., was raised to the peerage as Viscount Townshend, and both he and his son were[2] successively Lords-Lieutenants of their native county. The latter, we are told, was a strong supporter of the 'Protestant succession' at the time of the Revolution, and afterwards one of the Lords Justices of the Kingdom and Principal Secretary of State, and was constantly employed in diplomatic business. His marriage with the sister of Sir Robert Walpole—his neighbour at Houghton in Norfolk—added another stone to the rising fortunes of the

[1] It is possible that this name originally, like many others, was of purely local origin, being applied to a person living at the extreme 'end' of a 'town;' but there are not wanting those who affirm that the real orthography is Town*shend*, denoting military prowess in its founder as the 'shender' or 'destroyer' of cities—not unlike the epithet of πτολίπορθος, so constantly applied by Homer to Ulysses.

[2] This Lord Townshend lived in a house in Cleveland Row, St. James's, which is identified by that old gossip Sir Nathaniel Wraxall as still standing in his day, as that which witnessed the memorable quarrel between its owner and Sir Robert Walpole, when the First Minister of the Crown and his Secretary of State seized each other by the throat—a scene which Gay is supposed to have portrayed in the 'Beggar's Opera,' under the characters of Peachum and Lockitt.

family, and secured the Lord-Lieutenancy of his native county to a third and even a fourth generation.

One of his younger sons, Thomas Townshend, entering on a parliamentary career, though a man of no great abilities, yet proved a fair speaker, was chosen member for the University of Cambridge, and appointed one of the Tellers of the Exchequer. He was a great friend of Lord North, and was known in St. Stephen's and among the wits of the day as 'Tommy Townshend.' Some of our readers will remember the lines in Goldsmith's poem, 'Retaliation,' where he describes Burke as,

> Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat
> To induce Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote.

His brother, the third lord, had besides his successor a son Charles, who became an eminent statesman and parliamentary orator; it is he to whom Gray alludes in the lines,

> A post or a pension he did not desire,
> But left Church and State to Charles Townshend and Squire.

George Townshend, however, the eldest son, was a man of equal talents, and he completed the edifice which his ancestors had raised. He was a godson of King George I., and served under George II. at Dettingen. He also took part in the battles at Fontenoy and Culloden, and was commander-in-chief at the siege of Quebec, which city surrendered to him after the death of Wolfe. In the end he gained the bâton of a Field-Marshal, and was not only Master-General of the Ordnance, but also Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk, as his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had been before him. He was also the most popular of all the noblemen who held the post of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in the last century. He married a lady who owned a peerage in her own right, the barony of Ferrars de Chartley, which has since passed into abeyance. His son and successor, celebrated in his day as an antiquary and man of letters, left at his death in 1811 two

sons, of whom the younger, Lord Charles Townshend, died without issue in 1853, while his elder brother, George, came to the marquisate, having contracted in his father's lifetime a marriage with Sarah, daughter of Mr. John Dunn Gardner, of Chatteris, in Cambridgeshire.

It appears that, owing to some irregularities in early life, the marquis was forced to live abroad, and he resided in a state of seclusion for the best part of half a century at Genoa, where he had taken up his abode almost immediately after his marriage. From that day to the day of his death, at the close of 1855, his family and friends heard nothing of him or from him ; and the records extant at Doctors' Commons or in the House of Lords will serve to show, that only a few days after her marriage his wife had instituted proceedings at law, in order to have her union with his lordship declared null and void *ab initio*.

Now it frequently happens, especially in matters hymeneal, that young ladies, and middle-aged ladies too, will act precipitately. The sex is as deserving now as it was in the days of Æschylus, of the epithet of 'fast-going,' and the wife of his lordship (who at that time was known as Lord Chartley) formed no exception to the rule.

There are matters connected with the case before us which it is undesirable, indeed scarcely possible, to go into minute details with respect to the relations of Lord and Lady Chartley. So I will use the words employed in Mr. Hardwicke's 'Annual Biography' for 1856 :

'Our readers may possibly remember an event which took place in connection with the Townshend title a few years since. The late Marquis, it is well known, at that time Lord Chartley, separated from his wife shortly after his marriage, which she endeavoured to set aside by a suit in the Ecclesiastical Courts. These Courts, however, are proverbially slow in their proceedings, and while her suit was pending, she eloped from her father's house with the late Mr. John Margetts, a brewer of St. Ives, with whom she lived in Hunter

Street and other places, down to his death in 1842, calling herself at one time Mrs. Margetts, at other times the Marchioness Townshend. During this time she had by Mr. Margetts a family of sons and daughters, the former of whom were sent to Westminster School, first in the name of Margetts, and afterwards under the names of Lords A. and B. Townshend. The eldest son was actually returned to Parliament in 1841 as the Earl of Leicester by the electors of Bodmin, who fondly imagined that they had secured as their member the eldest son of a live marquis, and one who would hereafter prove a powerful patron of their interests in the House of Lords!

'At this time Lord Charles Townshend, next brother of the late marquis, and then heir-presumptive to the title (but since deceased without issue), presented a petition to the Crown and to the House of Lords, entreating that the children of Lady Townshend by Mr. Margetts might be declared illegitimate. The petition was referred to a Committee of Privilege, who, after hearing the evidence of a considerable number of witnesses, reported their opinion in favour of a Bill to that effect. A Bill accordingly was introduced, "for declaring the issue of Lady Townshend illegitimate," and it passed the House of Lords by a large majority in May 1843. If it had not been for this procedure on the part of Lord Charles Townshend, which was rendered more difficult by the forced residence of the late marquis abroad (for he had never taken his seat in the House of Peers, nor had he been in England since his accession to the title, nor seen his wife since her elopement), the marquisate of Townshend, with the noble estates of Raynham, in Norfolk, and the castle at Tamworth, would have passed to a spurious and supposititious race, the children of a brewer at St. Ives. By the death of Lord Charles Townshend in November 1853, his nephew, Captain John Townshend, became heir-presumptive to the title; and he had every reason to feel grateful for the event of a trial

but for which he might have found an irrevocable "slip between the cup and the lip" in the Townshend peerage.

'We may add that, the late marquis having died near Genoa on December 31, 1855, his late wife, mother of the children by Mr. Margetts, having remained a widow for nearly a fortnight, was married, by special licence, on January 12 following, to Mr. John Laidler, of whom report says that he was assistant to a linendraper at the West-end of London, until selected by her ladyship as her—shall we say second, or third—husband.'

It is clear, from the above brief narrative, that it was a most fortunate thing for the Townshend family that Lord Charles Townshend's life was spared long enough to enable him to prosecute this suit, and to submit the Townshend Peerage case for the calm consideration of the House of Lords. Had he not chosen to do so, but preferred to let matters coolly and quietly take their own course, it is not easy to see how, during his lifetime, the ultimate heirs of the reversion of the title could have mooted the question, and so secured the passing of an Act of Parliament to bastardise those who, even on their own showing, had no more right to the proud marquisate of Townshend and the halls of Raynham than the young of the cuckoo have to the nest of the thrush they have displaced. And a most useful lesson does the 'Romance of the Townshends' afford to such noble lords as, being burdened with the possible succession of a spurious issue, are too indolent and easy-going to take action in the matter. They may depend on it, if any such there be, that in these affairs speedy action is the safest policy, and the best for their own interests. I can only add that I do not make this remark at random, but mean it to apply to at least one case within my own personal knowledge, where an ancient title is risked on the turn of fortune's wheel in an almost similar manner.

THE DYMOKES OF SCRIVELSBY

THE recent death at Naples[1] of the Rev. John Dymoke, of Scrivelsby Manor, Lincolnshire, 'the Hon. Her Majesty's Champion,' reminded the world through the daily newspapers that, even in the midst of the present prosaic and utilitarian age, one knightly office at least was in existence to contradict the assertion of Edmund Burke that 'the age of chivalry is gone.' The office of 'Her Majesty's Champion' at all events has not passed away, in spite of the cheeseparing economy of the illiberal Liberals who happened to be in power at the coronation of William IV., in 1831, and again at that of her present Majesty in June 1838. It lived till a few months since in the late Rev. John Dymoke, and, as 'the King never dies,' so also 'never dies' is true of the Championship. *Le roi est mort ; vive le roi !* The late holder of the office was a clergyman, as indeed was his father before him ; but the new Champion and squire of Scrivelsby is a layman, a Lincolnshire magistrate, and an officer in the local militia. One thing is certainly in favour of the Championship as an institution, and that is that it is an unpaid office. It has no salary attached to it ; for, though the Dymoke family hold Scrivelsby on the feudal tenure of performing this duty, they have been owners of that manor for upwards of five hundred years ; and they obtained it, not by royal grant or out of the public purse, but by marriage with an heiress, the last of the proud line of Marmion, grand-daughter of Philip de Marmion, a name which recalls to us memories of chivalry and of the poetry of Shakespeare and Sir Walter Scott.

This office of 'Champion'—if we may believe Homer—was not unknown five-and-twenty centuries ago ; for very much the same duties as it entails were part of the knightly

[1] This paper was written in March 1874.

service which heralds and squires then paid to their royal masters. We read at all events in the 'Iliad' of heralds who were engaged in the Homeric age to challenge the encounters of single knights and to marshal the lists for the combat. We have no record of the office under the Saxon kings; but, according to Sir Bernard Burke, its duties were appended by William I., as an honour to the old baronial house of Marmyon, or Marmion, the ancient owners of the manor of Scrivelsby. This manor, together with the castle of Tamworth, he tells us, had been conferred, soon after the Norman Conquest, on one Robert de Marmyon (Lord of Fontenoy, in Normandy), on condition of performing the office of Champion at the king's coronation.

The following is the more circumstantial account of the descent of the manor given by Sir Bernard Burke in his 'Visitation of Seats':—

'The Lord of Fontenoy, thus invested with these extensive possessions in the conquered country, fixed his residence therein and became a munificent benefactor to the Church, bestowing on the nuns of Oldbury the lordship of Polesworth, with a request that the donor and his friend, Sir Walter de Somerville, might be reputed their patrons, and have burial for themselves and their heirs in the abbey—the Marmyons in the Chapter House, the Somervilles in the Cloyster. The direct male line of the grantee expired with his great-great-grandson, Philip de Marmyon, a gallant soldier, who, in requital of his fidelity to Henry III., during the baronial war, was rewarded after the victory of Evesham with the governorship of Kenilworth Castle. His death occurred 20 Edward I. (1292), and he was then found to have been seised of the manor of Scrivelsby and the castle of Tamworth. He left daughters only, and between them his extensive estates in Lincolnshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, and elsewhere were divided. By this partition Scrivelsby fell to the share of Joan, the youngest co-heir, and was by her conveyed in marriage to Sir Thomas de Ludlow. The offspring of the alliance con-

sisted of one son, John de Ludlow, who died issueless, and one daughter, Margaret, the Lady of Scrivelsby, who inherited from her brother that feudal manor, and wedding Sir John Dymoke, a knight of ancient Gloucestershire ancestry, invested him with the Championship, which high office he executed at the coronation of Richard II., despite the counterclaim of Sir Baldwin Freville, Lord of Tamworth, who descended from Margery, the second daughter of Philip de Marmyon. From that period to the present, a space of nearly five hundred years, the Dymokes have uninterruptedly enjoyed this singular and important estate, and have continuously performed the duties its tenure enjoins. It falls not, however, within our province here to narrate the distinguished achievements of the successive Lords of Scrivelsby, to tell how they maintained in splendour and dignity the ancient office they inherited, or to chronicle their gallant services on the battlefields of the Plantagenets in the Wars of the Roses and at the siege of Tournay.'

It may sound a little strange when I tell my readers that the name of Dymoke is Welsh. Sir Bernard Burke tells us that the Dymokes or Dymocks—for the name is spelt both ways—claim a traditional descent from Tudor Trevor, Lord of Hereford and Whittington, and founder of the tribe of the Marches.

The chief himself had three sons, the second of whom marrying a daughter of the Prince of North Wales, half a century before the Norman Conquest, became the ancestor of one David ap Madoc, who in the Welsh tongue was styled colloquially Dai Madoc, the word Dai being the short form of David, just as we put 'Will' for William, or 'Jim' for James. His son and heir was David ap Dai Madoc, or David Dai Madoc; and by the usual abridgment 'Dai Madoc' came in the course of time to be pronounced as Daimoc or Damoc, the transition from which to Dimoc or Dymoc, and again from that to Dimock or Dymoke, is easy and obvious. This certainly is the origin of the name of the Dymocks of Penley Hall,

Flintshire ; and most probably the Dymokes of Lincolnshire were of the same original stock.

The first, then, of the Dymoke family who fulfilled his office as Champion was Sir John Dymoke, Knight, who married Margaret Ludlow, in the reign of Edward III., and was present at the coronation of Richard II. His claim, it appears, was disputed by Baldwin de Freville, the Lord of Tamworth Castle ; but after deliberation it was found that the right belonged to the manor of Scrivelsby, as the *caput baroniæ*, or head of the barony of the Marmion family ; and, as it appeared that the late King Edward III., and his son Edward, Prince of Wales, known as the Black Prince, had often been heard to say that the office was held by Sir John Dymoke, the question was settled in his favour.

From that time to the present the office has been discharged by members of the Dymoke family ; at the coronations of Henry IV. and V. by Sir Thomas, son of the last named, who was created a Knight of the Bath at the coronation of Henry IV., along with forty-five other esquires, who 'watched the night before the ceremony, and bathed themselves.' His son, Sir Philip Dymoke, officiated at the coronation of Henry VI. ; and his grandson, Sir Thomas, at that of Edward IV. To mention each separate name would be tedious ; but it is noticeable that one of the family was three times 'Champion' to Richard III., Henry VII., and Henry VIII., and another to the three sovereigns who succeeded in turn to Henry's throne. The son of the man who had challenged all gainsayers of the right of the unfortunate James II. came forward again on a change of dynasty to throw down the glove for William and Mary, and again later for Queen Anne. His brother, Lewis Dymoke, was Champion at the coronation ceremonies of the first two sovereigns of the House of Brunswick ; while John Dymoke held the same office for George III., at whose coronation, tradition has it, the young Pretender, 'Bonnie Prince Charlie,' was present in disguise. Sir Henry Dymoke, a grandson, brother of the gentleman now deceased, was

Champion at the coronation of George IV., the hereditary champion, a clergyman, being allowed to perform the office by proxy. This Sir Henry was offered a baronetcy in 1841, and accepted it—scandal said in payment for waiving his right in 1838—though it was generally thought that the office of 'Her Majesty's Champion' was in itself a higher honour than a modern baronetcy, and it was remembered that one of the family had not so very long before laid claim, though unsuccessfully, to the ancient barony of Marmion. The 'Champion,' whose death I have mentioned above, was the brother of Sir Henry; he had held for some years the family living of Scrivelsby, and was a magistrate for Lincolnshire.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1821 contains a picture of the Royal Champion, Henry Dymoke in the act of riding on his white charger into Westminster Hall, and throwing down the gauntlet or glove of defiance, supported on either side by the Duke of Wellington and the Marquis of Anglesey, also on horseback, while two heralds stand by on foot with tabards and plumes.

The performance of the Champion on this occasion is thus described by Sir Walter Scott, in a letter to one of his friends and correspondents:

'The Champion's duty was performed, as of right, by young Dymoke, a fine-looking youth, but bearing perhaps a little too much the appearance of a maiden knight to be the challenger of the world in the king's behalf. He threw down his gauntlet, however, with becoming manhood, and showed as much horsemanship as the crowd of knights and squires around him would permit to be exhibited. His armour was in good taste; but his shield was out of all propriety—being a round *rondache*, or Highland target, a defensive weapon which it would be impossible to use on horseback, instead of being a three-cornered or leather shield, which in the time of the tilt was suspended round the neck. Pardon this antiquarian scruple, which you may believe occurred to few but myself. On the whole, this striking part of the exhibition somewhat disappointed me, for

I would have had the champion less embarrassed by his assistants, and at liberty to put his horse on the *grand pas*. And yet the young lord of Scrivelsby looked and behaved extremely well.'

On the occasion of the coronation of George III. the Champion was seated on the grey charger which the late king had ridden at the battle of Dettingen ; and it appears that the fee received for carrying out the duties of the office was a large bowl and cover of silver, finely chased and gilt.

Those who wish to become acquainted with the look of the champion of three centuries back can, if they take the trouble to visit the College of Arms, see a volume which contains a pedigree of the Dymoke family. There is a true representation of one painted in the margin opposite to the name, as he appeared accoutred on horseback, glove in hand. The trappings of his horse are black, embroidered all over with little silver lions passant, the arms of the Dymoke family. The armour is of nearly the same fashion as the beautiful suit still preserved in the Tower of London, which was presented by the Emperor Charles V. to Henry VIII. on his marriage with Catharine of Arragon.

Standard English works contain several references to the Champion and his office. The passage in Shakespeare's 'King Henry VI.,' when Sir John Montgomery appears before the walls of York, at the head of the army in the cause of Edward IV., will be remembered by many readers, where this dialogue occurs :

Mont. Ay now, my Sovereign speaketh like himself ;
And now will I be Edward's champion.

Hast. Sound, trumpet ; Edward shall be here proclaimed.
Come, fellow-soldier, make thou proclamation.

And when the soldier has read aloud the name, style, and title of the king, Montgomery adds, as he throws down the gauntlet,

And whosoe'er gainsays King Edward's right,
By this I challenge him to single fight.

On the occasion of the enthronement of Queen Mary, it was upon a roan horse, trapped in cloth of gold, that Sir Edward Dymoke appeared, with a mace in one hand and a gauntlet in the other, to challenge 'any manere of man, of whatsoever state, who impeacheth the Quene's title, as a faulse traytour.' Nobody on that occasion 'wanted to fight,' so Sir Edward picked his own glove up and went away with a bow and a gold cup for his trouble.

It appears, according to Planché's 'Royal Records,' in which the portrait of the Champion is reproduced in facsimile, that Dymoke came into the hall at the close of the second course of the banquet which succeeded the ceremony of the coronation. After his entrance, fully equipped, he was escorted to the upper end of the hall, and 'after he had made obeisance to the Queen's Highness, in bowing his head, he turned him a little aside, and with a loud voice declared' as follows: '"If there be any manner of man, of what estate, degree, or condition soever he be, that will say and maintain that our Sovereign Lady, Queen Mary the First, this day here present, is not the rightful and undoubted inheritrix to the imperial crown of this realm of England, and that of right she ought not to be crowned Queen, I say he lieth like a false traitor, and that I am ready the same to maintain with him whilst I have breath in my body, either now at this time, or at any other time, whensoever it shall please the Queen's Highness to appoint, and thereupon the same, I cast him my gage." And then he cast his gauntlet from him, the which no man would take up, till that a herald took it up and gave it to him again. Then he proceeded to another place, and did in this manner in three several places of the said hall. Then he came to the upper end, and the Queen's Majesty drank to him, and after sent him the cup, which he had for his fee, and likewise the harness and trappings, and all the harness which he did wear. Then he returned to the place from whence he came, and after that he was gone.'

Elizabeth at her coronation, we are told, went first into

St. Edward's Chapel 'to shrift her,' and came forth in 'a riche mantle and surcoat of purple velvet, trimmed with ermines;' and at the banquet which followed, says Holinshed, 'the hall (Westminster) was richly hung, and everything ordered in such a royal manner as appertained to such a regal and solemn feast. In the meantime, as her grace (the Queen) sat at dinner, Sir Edward Dimmocke, her Champion by office, in fair complete armour, mounted upon a beautiful courser, richly trapped in cloth of gold, entered the hall, and in the midst thereof cast down his gauntlet, with offer to right him in her quarrel that should deny her to be the righteous and lawful Queen of this realm. The Queen, taking a cup of gold full of wine, drank to him thereof, and sent it to him for his life, together with the cover.'

The banquet at the coronation of Queen Anne must have been very splendid. Her Majesty having washed and seated herself at table, with two of her women at her feet, the Lord Sewer, the Serjeant of the Silvery Scullery, called for a dish of meat, took assay of the dish, and carried it up, aided by the clerks of the green cloth. Then a dish of dilly-grout was set over against her Majesty, and a bishop said grace before the dilly-grout, and in came the Queen's champion, on whose person many pounds avoirdupois of gold and silver glittered, and there nodded over his helmet a plume of feathers—white, blue, and red. The trumpets sounded, the steed snorted and slipped, and then and there having defied the hypothetical traitor, who never made an appearance, the steel glove was flung upon the pavement, and presently merely picked up again.

As my readers may be glad to know in what form the claim to the championship was made, the following is taken from the records in the 'College of Arms' by the permission of my kind friend 'Garter King of Arms.' It is an extract from the petition of the Rev. John Dymoke to the Lords Commissioners appointed to receive and determine the claims of those who by tenure of their lands or otherwise ought to

'perform service at the coronation,' from which we learn something of the duty the Champion is called upon to perform, and also gain some idea as to his personal appearance. After setting forth his right and title to the manor of Scrivelsby in consequence of the death of his relative, the petitioner proceeds to show that he holds the said manor by Grand Serjeantry, or, in other words, 'That whensoever any King or Queen of England is to be crowned, the lord of the manor for the time being, or another person on his behalf, with his authority, if he shall be unable, shall come well armed for war on a good charger in the presence of the said lord the King on the day of his coronation,' &c. And that 'your petitioner and his ancestors, and all those whose estate your petitioner hath in the said manor or barony, from time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary,' have been champions of this realm, and that they have been used to have 'one of the grand chargers of the King or Queen, with saddle, harness, and trappings of cloth of gold, and one of the best suits of armour of our said lord the king, with cloth of gold, and twenty yards of satin of the colour of crimson, with all things which appertain to the body of the lord, the King, as entirely as he ought to have if he had to go to mortal combat.' On the day of coronation, 'being mounted on the said charger . . . and being accompanied by the Lord High Constable and the Earl Marshal, and the herald of the king, with a trumpet sounded before him,' the Champion had to come on horseback into the hall where the king or queen was seated at dinner; and there, in the presence of the king, and in the hearing of all the people, when the trumpet had been three times solemnly sounded, one of the heralds made proclamation with a loud voice to the effect that if any person should deny or say that the king ought not to enjoy the crown of these realms, 'Here is his champion ready by his body to prove that he lies like a false traitor, and in that quarrel to adventure his life on any day that shall be assigned to him.' On this the Champion throws down his gauntlet, and in the event of

no one gainsaying that the king or queen has been crowned a sovereign, the king drinks to the Champion during such service in a cup of gold having a cover. The cup is afterwards handed to the Champion to drink from. This cup, together with the charger, saddle, harness, and all apparel and armour, are then given to the Champion for his fee.

The ancient baronial seat of the Dymoke family, Scrivelsby Court, is situated in a park about two miles south of Horncastle, on the road towards Revesby Abbey and Boston. The greater part of this fine old seat was unhappily destroyed by fire some hundred years since. In the portion consumed was a very large hall, ornamented with panels, exhibiting in heraldic emblazonment the various arms and alliances of the family through all its numerous and far-traced descents. The loss has been in some degree compensated by the addition which the late proprietors made to the remnant which escaped the ravages of the flames; but the grandeur of the original edifice can no longer be traced.

I make no excuse for putting before my readers the following quaint old ballad, which describes with perspicuity and truth the transmission of the lands of Scrivelsby:

The Norman Barons Marmyon
  At Norman Court held high degree;
Brave knights and Champions everyone,
  To him who won brave Scrivelsby.

Those Lincoln lands the Conqueror gave,
  That England's glove they should convey,
To knight renowned amongst the brave,
  The Baron bold of Fonteney.

The royal grant, through sire to son,
  Devolved direct *in capite*
Until deceased Phil Marmyon,
  When rose fair Joan of Scrivelsby.

Thro' midnight's gloom one sparkling star
  Will seem to shine more brilliantly
Than all around, above, afar;
  So shone the maid of Scrivelsby.

From London city on the Thames,
To Berwick Town upon the Tweed,
Came gallants all of courtly names,
At feet of Joan their suit to plead.

Yet *malgré* all this goodly band,
The maiden's smiles young Ludlow won,
Her heart and hand, her grant and land,
The sword and shield of Marmyon.

Out upon Time, the scurvy knave,
Spoiler of youth, hard-hearted churl;
Fast hurrying to one common grave
Good wife and ladie, hind and earl.

Out upon Time—since world began,
No sabbath hath his greyhound limb,
In coursing man, devoted man,
To age and death—out, out on him!

In Lincoln's chancel, side by side,
Their effigies from marble hewn,
The 'anni' written when they died,
Repose De Ludlow and Dame Joan.

One daughter fair survived alone,
One son deceased in infancy;
De Ludlow and De Marmyon
United thus in Margery.

And she was woo'd as maids have been,
And won as maids are sure to be,
When gallant youths in Lincoln green
Do suit, like Dymoke, fervently.

Sir John de Dymoke claimed of right
The Championship through Margery,
And 'gainst Sir Baldwin Freville, knight,
Prevailed as Lord of Scrivelsby.

And ever since, when England's kings
Are diadem'd—no matter where—
The Champion Dymoke boldly flings
His glove, should treason venture there.

On gallant steed in armour bright,
His vizor closed and couched his lance,
Proclaimeth he the monarch's right
To England, Ireland, Wales, and France.

Then bravely cry, with Dymoke bold,
Long may the King triumphant reign!
And when fair hands the sceptre hold,
More bravely still—Long live the Queen!

Truly, as Mr. Pepys says in his diary, 'Good Lord! but the times doe change.' Changed indeed they are from the times of our Edwards and Henries, and never again probably will the gallant spectacles which have so often graced Westminster Hall in days gone by be witnessed. These old-world glories fade like the gilding on tombstones, which wears away till the meaning becomes obscure, and is replaced by a new stone. Yet we may affirm that some fine fragment of antiquity lies in the ceremony of which I have endeavoured to give my readers some idea. The gold-coated and feathered champion was the monument of the early rite of 'ordeal by battle,' whereby the sword and spear held the place of the modern tribunal of the law to which combatants now resort. It might have been awkward if we had now to trust the 'peace and rightfulness' of this fair realm 'to a single knight, worthy as he might be,' and his charger, however imposing. The custom died out, for the condition of things had changed, and monarchs now trust to the attachment of loyal hearts, which, though they make little show, are a stronger defence than aught can ever be—even than the right hand of a champion like 'Dymoke of Scrivelsby.'

Since the above was written, death has again visited this ancient house, carrying off the son and successor of the above-mentioned Lord of Scrivelsby, Mr. Henry Lionel Dymoke, who has passed away, not in his own halls, but among strangers, and before attaining even middle age, leaving a widow, but no legitimate issue.

Family feuds and pecuniary difficulties have together done their best to level in the dust a once noble house, whose heads once ranked as equal to the proudest peers of the realm. There is, therefore, I believe, no male Dymoke who at this moment, if a coronation were to occur, could put in a claim for the Championship—at all events, without first establishing his descent in a court of law.

Such is the sad end of 'The Dymokes of Scrivelsby.' Had the second Marquis Townshend been still alive, in all pro-

bability he would have chosen this moment to prefer a claim to the honour on his own account. At all events, Horace Walpole wrote to Lady Ossory, under date October 1789 :

'When he was but two-and-twenty, his lordship called on me one morning and told me he proposed to claim the championcy of England, being descended from the *eldest* daughter of Ralph de Basset, who was Champion before the Flood—or before the Conquest, I forget which—whereas the Dymokes came only from the *second* ; and he added, "I did put in my claim at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth." A gentleman who was with me, and who did not understand the heraldic tongue, hearing such a declaration from a young man, stared and thought he had gone raving mad ; and I, who did understand him, am still not clear that the gentleman was in the wrong.'

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